"A True Relation of Dr. Dee his Actions with spirits": Edited by Meric Casaubon. Pubd London, 1659.

P.245. Note by Dee on an interview with Don Wilhelmo de Sancto Clemente, the Spanish Ambassador at Prague.

Monday, Sept. 24, 1584.

The Ambassador "declared that he was lineally descended out of the consanguinity, of one a Gentleman, but unlettred at the first, who left his wife, children and family in Maiorca, and ascended an Hill there, and in place solitary remained an whole year, and at the years end, he came down, but so learned and wise, that all who knew him before, wondered at it. And that the same man was called Raymondo Lullio: and that he made that which is called the Philosophers Stone, as in England (said he) I understand is good record of it: Therefore I see, quoth he, that it is a truth and possible: and as he hath granted the knowledge of it to one man, so he may grant it to another, &c."

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THREE FAMOUS ALCHEMISTS

RAYMUND LULLY

CORNELIUS AGRIPPA

THEOPHRASTUS PARACELSUS

THREE FAMOUS ALCHEMISTS

RAYMUND LULLY
by ARTHUR EDWARD WAITE, D.Litt.

CORNELIUS AGRIPPA
by LEWIS SPENCE

THEOPHRASTUS PARACELSUS
by W. P. SWAINSON

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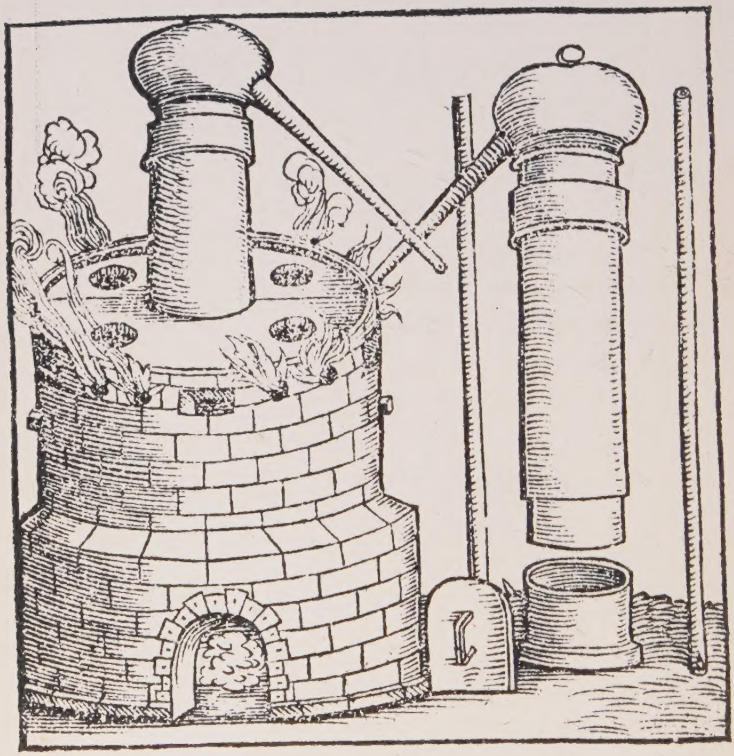

ALCHEMICAL APPARATUS
For Sublimation

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RAYMUND LULLY

ILLUMINATED DOCTOR, ALCHEMIST AND CHRISTIAN MYSTIC

CHAPTER I

A PROBLEM OF PERSONALITY

THERE are few names in mediæval literature and in the history of its philosophical thought, around which has gathered a more curious woof of legend confused with fact than the name of Raymund Lully. There is nothing within my knowledge at any place or period, in any bibliographical record, corresponding to the peculiar growth which arose out of that complex and the life within it during a space of some five centuries. It happens to be a growth of literature, represented by at least two and, as it may be, three cycles of books. The explanation is that we are confronted by a duality or trinity of persons subsisting under a single denomination and identified therefore as one, though when their memorials pass under examination the multiple prodigy by no means stands for unity. To the earliest cycle belongs Raymund Lully of Majorca in the Balearic Isles, an historical character about

whom we know something, and could certainly extend our knowledge by research into his own memorials and into Spanish history of his period. Something in this direction is attempted by the present monograph. He is the central figure, who has been clothed upon by all the legends, a hero of romance, a memorable Catalonian poet, an illuminated doctor, an apostle and missionary in the Name of Christ, in fine a martyr for that faith of which he was the champion. He is also a figure of some consequence in intellectual thought, and must not be ignored in the philosophical history of his age, for he devised an art of knowledge and reasoning, which was by no means neglected in his day, and was taught subsequently at certain centres for about two hundred years. It was called *Ars Magna Sciendi*[1] and *Ars Lulliana*, even the Universal Science,[2] and its title to consideration resides in the fact that it embodied a formal scheme to displace the scholastic method at the seats of learning in Europe. The historical Raymund Lully stands for more than this, as we shall find, and as I have indeed intimated, but at the moment he may be presented thus.

Some time after his death the name and fame which he left behind, brought to birth a second Lully, made in his own image, and after

[1] Otherwise *Ars Compendiaria Inveniendi Veritatem.*

[2] Compare the title of Lully's supplementary work for the elucidation of *Ars Magna*, i.e. *Ars Universalis, seu Lectura super Artem compendiosam inveniendi Veritatem.*

his formal likeness, but with other concerns and claims. The *Doctor Illuminatus* and his so-called Inventive Art, reached the completion of his cycle in the commentaries to which his works gave rise. The second Lully—who was *Doctor Alchemicus*—originated a new cycle, and by all lovers of the Hermetic Art he was accounted *ab origine* one of the Great Masters of Alchemy, a witness whose authority was unquestioned and whose word was held final on the mystery of transmuting metals. A new legend arose in this manner, was incorporated with the first, and—although exceedingly late in its final and most popular form—is now a thing of repute in the history of Hermetic Philosophy.

There is a sense in which the third Lully—if I can venture so to designate him—has been discovered by myself, for he has remained in the obscurity of various Latin texts, till, in years long past, I had the courage to evoke his shade,[1] though so far only by presuming the fact of his existence. Whether he was Lully of Majorca in another mood or—as I think—a third personality, it seems good that here and now I am able to give brief account concerning him, hoping perhaps that, in some spacious day to come, it may be possible to proceed further. For in truth the third Lully, who is a kind of *Doctor Mysticus*, emerges as chief of all, another and more enlightened Master, no longer discoursing on *Ars Inventiva*

[1] See *Doctrine and Literature of the Kabbalah.*

Veritatis, explaining the high art of stuffing the head with knowledge and fitting it with machinery of debate, but concerned rather with the paths and thresholds leading to that deeper mode in which the mind is emptied of images, that it may be filled with the glory of God. The third Lully is a theosophist who has drawn spiritual intimations and reflections alike from East and West, though he depends most generally on his own inward resources rather than on authorities of the past. It is not my intention to magnify the import of his record beyond its due measures, as if *Arbor Philosophiæ Amoris* and *De Amico et Amate* had sounded deepest wells of Divine Experience; but this spiritual doctor knew something at first hand of that admirable and rare state in which God enters the soul and abides therein.

The legend of the original Lully has been expanded to incorporate the personality and work of the alchemist, while—as it seems to me—the third has been joined with the others by an indiscriminate disposition to father on the first Raymund whatever was produced by his followers, or could, on any artificial warrant, be connected with his name. When *Ars Lulliana* was little more than a record on faded leaves, and the blessed doctor of the Balearic Isles remained only as a local devotion in the believing heart of Majorca, some of these mystical and semi-mystical texts were included in certain mammoth folios, denominated

Raymundi Lullii Opera Omnia, published at Mayence in 1734 and onward. A few others had been printed previously, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, and even earlier. They were hall-marked in such manner and delivered to posterity as if with an explicit guarantee of authenticity. The explanation of this unusual literary puzzle is perhaps more simple than it seems. The original Raymund Lully was precisely one of those figures in mediæval history about whom myth and legend were almost certain to gather. He was, in particular, one on whom the unscrupulous apostolate of alchemy, which tended always to take shelter under great names of the past, was antecedently likely to fasten, either by the production of treatises under his name or by affixing his name to tracts extant already, but of obscure or unknown authorship. We shall see in due course that it is impossible for Raymund Lully of the *Ars Magna* to be the Lully of Abbot Cremer's story, and the author of those Hermetic writings which pass under his name. As regards the assumed third personality, it is more difficult to speak, but I have explained my point of view, and it will be developed further as we proceed.

The magnificent Mayence folios contain (1) the unquestioned writings of the Illuminated Doctor embodying or connected with and arising from *Ars Magna Sciendi,* including many treatises on the arts, humanities and philosophy, some of them recalling the mode

and matter of *Ars Magna* and some foreign thereto ; (2) a variety of theological tracts, as, e.g., *De Anima Rationali* and *De Deo et Jesu Christe*, together with polemical writings in defence of Christianity against infidels, e.g. *Liber de Gentili et Tribus Sapientibus*, *Disputatio Fidelis et Infidelis*, and so forth ; (3) certain exceedingly curious disquisitions on the Philosophy of Love and Love of the Good, as also Flowers of Love and Understanding, which are to be classed broadly as mystical. The alchemical texts are not included in the extant volumes of *Opera Omnia*, but it follows from one of the theses which introduce the whole collection that they were designed to appear, and I conceive that they would be found in the seventh or eighth volume, alike wanting in the only set with which I am acquainted.[1] In this case the three Lullys of my hypothesis are all represented in the Mayence edition, or were at least intended to be so, and, as I can observe on the part of the editors no intention to reject anything which passes under the name, I infer that the collection, had it been completed, would have ex-

[1] The British Museum has vols. i to vi, both inclusive, and vols. ix and x. The note of an earlier owner says that vols. vii and viii were never published, and that practically the whole Mayence collection was destroyed by fire, so that a set, imperfect as it is, must be listed as of the uttermost rarity. On the last point there is no counter-opinion possible: I have been looking for the *Opera Omnia* through all my literary life. On the other hand, why the ninth and tenth volumes should have been issued and the preceding two held over the note does not explain.

tended to a great number of volumes, supposing that texts were available. A vast proportion of these remains in manuscript, scattered through the libraries of Europe, which notwithstanding there is abundant material available for the study of Raymund Lully in the printed versions alone, both within and without the limits of that which was done at Mayence.

I propose in the present monograph to give account of the facts and legends respecting the Illuminated Doctor and his Hermetic counterpart. The historical Raymund Lully is of importance, as I have said. At a time when, under the ægis of scholasticism, Aristotle reigned everywhere, it was Lully who sounded the earliest note of revolt against the great Stagyrite and the regnant methods of the schools. The second Lully may be termed the first of two great names in alchemical literature, traditionally ascribed to the same period and under any circumstances not separated by any too considerable space of time. Behind them lies the wonderful cycle of Byzantine, Arabian and Syriac alchemy; but this was practically unknown in the West during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, except indeed by reflections in the Latin Geber and the Latinised *Turba Philosophorum*. The third Lully is a mystical exponent of the Lover and Beloved in God, the states of the soul in contemplation, and certain aspects of Divine Attainment.

CHAPTER II

THE ILLUMINATED DOCTOR OF MAJORCA

As regards the human personality whose tale in history and legend I am about to present, one is reminded that a brilliant but ephemeral reputation was compared by Byron to "the comet of a season." The saying has passed from the realm of poetry to that of proverb, and, as he made unquestionably a considerable figure at his period, it has been thought applicable to Raymund Lully, because his season passed and his name awakens a definite recollection now among only a few specialists in the story of mediæval thought. But it would seem that as much might be said for other reputations innumerable, all the wide world over and all the ages through. The fact is that our knowledge is in proportion to our concern. There is nothing, perhaps, more narrow in all our mundane measures than that which is called celebrity, except in so far as the latest prize-ring hero is blazed more in the common trumps of fame than ever was saint or sage. The surest shrine, however, is in the hearts or minds of a few. Raymund Lully occupies a middle place, but one that is permanent after its own kind. He carries, indeed,

many titles to remembrance. As the Illuminated Doctor he exercised no small influence on his generation, while for a considerable period afterwards it may be said that intellectual Europe was acquainted with his art or method, and the zeal of his missionary labours must have reached many ears.

According to his chequered story, he may be held to have united the saint and man of learning, the philosopher and preacher, the apostle and wandering student, the dialectician and martyr. In his youth he was a courtier and man of pleasure; in maturer years he was the discoverer and expositor of the Art to which I have referred under the denomination of an universal science, revealed to him—as he believed—by God; after his death some of his propositions are said to have been condemned at Rome, and—though the fact is doubtful—he is still classed as a heretic in a few popular chronologies of the Latin Church.[1] This notwith-

[1] According to one account the works of Lully were removed from the *Index* by a decree of the Council of Trent, but another says—as we shall see—that the condemned writings were those of a different Raymund. The question is exceedingly confused, and would not repay the long pains of investigation. It is on record that the alleged condemnation occurred in 1376, owing to Dominican influence, but that the authenticity of the Bull is doubtful. So also is the justification of Lully, for the Bull is said to have been amended in 1417; but the supposed action of the Council of Trent is referred to 1563. The Bull was "exhibited" by Nicholas Eymeric, Inquisitor of Aragon, but it is reported that "the Lullists secured his banishment, and Eymeric died in exile." See A. S. Tuberville: *Mediæval Heresy and the Inquisition*, 1920, p. 71. Also P. Piedro Blanco Soto: *Estudios de Bibliografia Lulliana*, Madrid, 1916.

standing, the process of his beatification began, and the fact that it fell through may have been the want of sufficient influence and money at the headquarters of interest in the Balearic Isles, rather than difficulties over points of doctrine. Meanwhile, his relics were supposed to work miracles at Majorca, and colleges were founded, as I have said, there and here in Europe for teaching the *Ars Lulliana*. From beginning to end the story of his life is embedded in devotional myth and the wonder-working element of his period, so that I cannot extricate it entirely. Its verifiable and probable facts have their setting in legend, and must be left therein.

In respect of genealogy, the father of Raymund Lully was a gentleman of Barcelona who served under the banner of John I, King of Aragon, at the conquest of the Balearic Isles from the Mohammedans in 1231. He had a grant of lands in Majorca as a consideration for these aids, and there he rested on his arms. It is said that he was of an old and noble Catalonian family, and was possessed of considerable wealth. He was also married, and over this fact legend intervenes with the worn and weariful story that his happiness, and that of his wife, had been marred, because no children were born to their union. I do not read of pilgrimages, even to Compostella, but rather that husband and wife had recourse to earnest prayer, and that it was answered, *circa* 1235, by the birth of a son at Palma, who was named

Raymund, like his father. While the young Raymund grew in grace and years, his parents are pictured as in anxiety over the matter of his studies, about the last thing which would occur to a lord of the manor in Majorca towards the middle of the thirteenth century, having recollections of his own prowess in the field and sound reasons for knowing that the Moors were ever on the threshold. In any case, when the heart of the boy hankered after the life of arms, he could not have earned great displeasure; and arms he chose, though it does not appear that he took them seriously in hand, or won his spurs in battle.[1] From confusion to further confusion his tale goes on. I have failed to discover that the Balearics were erected into a separate kingdom soon after their conquest or that the Court of Aragon was moved for a period to Majorca. On the contrary, Don Jaime of Aragon was King of the Balearics, Catalonia and Languedoc.[2] But Raymund Lully is represented as "becoming page to the King," with whom he acquired such favour that he was installed, when still in his youth,

[1] Among the multitude of works which are attributed to him, against all likelihood and in the absence of all evidence, there are some on the art of war, but I do not find that they have been printed.

[2] They were under the rule of a Moslem King when they were taken in 1231. Don Jaime, for the consideration of another possession, exchanged them with Don Pedro, Infante of Portugal, but appears to have recovered them when he sent an expedition to subdue the Moslem inhabitants, who had risen up in rebellion. In 1264 he gave them to his youngest son; but this is too late for the court-life of Raymund Lully.

as Grand Provost, and then as Seneschal of the Isles. Possibly he was sent to the mainland, for the kind of biographers who made him part of their concern in the old days seem apt to take curious leaps, alike in place and time. The question does not signify. We are assured that he was somehow at Court, with his feet already on the ladder of royal patronage, and in the sun of such good fortune. But he is said to have used the advantages of this distinguished position for dissolute ends, without restraint or measure. The flower of his manhood looked like wasting in the extravagance of palace-life, and in the licence of so-called love.

Being also a great maker of verses, he won his way to favour with woman-kind in this among other ways.[1] His excesses have been represented as so glaring that his parents, and King James II. himself, took the youth severely to task, and in fine, as a possible remedial measure, they married him to a wife at once virtuous, beautiful and wealthy.[2] Catherine Sabots, or alternatively Blanca Picany, is said to have gained his affections; but neither this fact nor the birth in succession of

[1] He has been called the most popular Spanish poet of his period, and one of acknowledged influence on Catalonian literature. Lully's *Obras Rimadas*, or various Catalan poetical works, were edited by G. Rosselló in 1859.

[2] According to another story, his Court life began after his marriage, when he passed over to the mainland, and became Seneschal of the palace, not of the Isles. In this case the story of Ambrosia must be transferred to Montpellier.

three children put an end to his wanton life. I suspect here something of the exaggeration of fable, more especially as part of my material comes from French sources. There is, perhaps, some historical foundation for one episode which proved a turning-point. Señora Ambrosia Eleonora de Castello de Gênes was one of the Court beauties for whom he conceived a great passion; but it happened that her inward purity was greater than her outward graces. She was married, moreover, and—as it is said—to a man whom she loved. The story is told after several contradictory manners, the French versions being characteristically false in sentiment.

When Raymund Lully, lost to all around him, except the object of infatuation, followed her, all on horseback as he was, into a Church of Palma, where she had gone one morning to Mass, the lady took counsel with her husband, that an end might be put to her persecution and the notoriety to which it gave rise, in view of the high rank of both parties. In the end she wrote to him—as some say, in reply to a letter by which he sought for pardon, but made bad worse by a sonnet. The script of Ambrosia has been termed an exhortation to a lover, dissuading him from the profanation of love. There is more than one fraudulent version extant. He was an intelligence created for God, and how then should he rationally devote himself to the very least of God's creatures? Such is the salient point of all the

pretended letters, together with an intimation that she could undeceive him terribly if she chose. As might be expected, the lady added fuel to the fire, and still—as the legend tells—acting on her husband's advice, she called Raymund Lully into her presence, and showed him her breast, disfigured by a cancer-growth. "Look on what thou lovest, Raymund Lully," she is supposed to have exclaimed amidst tears. "Behold the state of this wretched body, in which thy heart has centred all its hopes." I have called it the turning-point. The next scene exhibits the lover embracing the feet of a crucifix, and consecrating himself henceforward to the service of God alone. The night rewarded him in vision, after the manner of the age and its fervour. "From henceforth follow thou Me," said Christ to the reconciled sinner.[1]

Raymund Lully at this time was about thirty years old.[2] He filled an honourable situation at Court, and might have aspired to any distinction for himself and his family. All this notwithstanding, he resolved to renounce the world, and is represented presently dividing his estate, so that those who belonged to him

[1] The *Vita* prefixed to vol. i of the *Opera* knows nothing of this story, but Lully is said to have been writing a poem about a certain lady *quam tunc amore fatuo diligebat.* As he wrote he saw the Lord Jesus Christ hanging on the cross; but this vision recurred several times before it effected his conversion.

[2] Compare *Liber Contemplationis in Deo, Pars* IX, in which Lully condemns himself for thirty barren years of existence.

should have what he deemed their due, while his personal needs were allotted a small portion and the rest went to the poor. In other words, his wife and children were not left so utterly in the lurch as is usual in such stories, and this may count for righteousness—to the credit at least of the legend.[1] Otherwise, his place among his people knew him no more. "Watch it," said some of the crowd, as they loitered through the palace, expecting that he would return shortly to the old ways. The rest accused him of plunging headlong from one extravagance to another.

The romantic legend ends at this point in most of the versions, and we are left to put together as we can the piecemeal record of Lully's wandering life thereafter. A pilgrimage to St. John in Galicia, a retreat thereat; the habit of religion assumed, but not cloistered life; a period passed on Mount Randa,[2] where he had retained a small hold; an illness, and two other visions of our Saviour vouchsafed for his consolation and support,—these things stand at their value, however we sort them out. Two points of fact emerge for the shaping of his future ways. As one who had given up all for

[1] Another account represents him devoting years to study, till he was so overwrought that his wife and family appointed an official to administer his estate.

[2] Otherwise, Rauda and Aranda. An American writer has suggested that the reference is really to Mount Roda, near Barcelona; but for this there seems no warrant. The *Vita* says: *Ascendit in Montem quendam de Randa, qui non longe distabat a suo domo*—he being then in Majorca.

God, he prayed earnestly to God for light, and there is no question that—in his own view—he received it in all measures of fullness, namely, *Ars Lulliana*, a perfect intellectual illumination, otherwise a capacity for reasoning on all subjects after a new manner, before which the sun of the old school and of Aristotle its master was designed to set. This is the first fact; but, as to all that it meant, we shall see later on in a brief and summary sketch. It stood for mission enough within the scope of a single life, and even so it was a question whether firm scholastic walls would crumple at the blowing of a Balearic horn. They were not adamant, but assuredly they were not of straw. Moreover, it was the day of Duns Scotus and the great Angel of the Schools.

Now, the second fact is that of another mission, whether or not it was evolved somewhat later. The Moslem dwelt at the gates through all those strenuous times, an armed witness against Christ and the Church of Christ, preaching a rival gospel with sword and fire. But it had a philosophy also, and was making conquests with the pen. From the standpoint of Lully, the written word of Averroës was in opposition to the Word of God, yet it had been taken into the orthodox schools, and was taught therein. The seats of Christian learning were occupied by Aristotle and his expounder Averroës. It was not enough, therefore, to have conceived or received from above an Universal Science, however great its art or conclusive its

method. He must speak with the Moslem enemy, not only in his own gates but in the streets of his own cities. So grew up within him the sense of a personal mission for the conversion of Mahomet to Christ. There was a nation, a race at stake, and the crown of such an apostolate might shine as a greater glory of God than any diadem of scholastic conquest. But the *Ars Lulliana* did not include among its treasures an automatic gift of tongues, and, though his field of evangelical mission lay almost within sight, across the blue Mediterranean waters, he could not adventure thither until he had learned Arabic; he spent accordingly six years on the language. Out of this fact comes the legendary episode of another vision, in which Lully saw the leaves of a myrtle or mastic tree inscribed with characters which he took for the Arabic alphabet: as the legend would have it, his will to convert the heathen evolved out of this vision.

Meanwhile, he was not to rest idle in other respects, so we hear of him located at Paris, and there proclaiming his neo-scholastic method. Paris may have cared at the moment as much and as little as Spain, and elsewhere, in a later day, for a supposed reformation in the arts which Christian Rosy Cross brought back from the Hidden City of Damcar. But the Universal Science began to take form in books—tracts on philosophy, tracts on theology, tracts even on medicine, though it is held antecedently that these last are ascribed falsely, like those of

alchemy, and indeed with yet more reason. The life of an itinerant philosopher at that period, proceeding to hang up his theses, literally or symbolically, at various gates of learning, does not suggest an extraordinary output of considerable and elaborate works, more especially when it is complicated further by an apostolate among the heathens. Such an output, and one of colossal dimensions, has been attributed to Raymund Lully, but it is largely supposititious, as sober criticism agrees. This notwithstanding, his authentic tracts are sufficiently considerable for us to conclude that he must have written in season and out of season, almost with fevered haste.

The scheme for the propagation of the gospel in foreign parts stood over, as we have seen, pending a certain development. A chronological harmony continues to baffle research, but we may picture Lully as again perhaps at Majorca, and it may be about this time that we hear of him employing a Mohammedan servant for his personal improvement in colloquial Arabic. The hireling proved a zealot of his own kind, in opposition to the zealotry of his master, and when he learned that the latter was planning to heap confusion on the Koran and its prophet, he attacked Lully with a dagger, for the glory of the faith of Islam. The Illuminated Doctor proved, however, the better man in a struggle, and the Arab was thrown into prison, where he strangled himself in wrath at his failure. The dagger had wounded

Lully, and he retired for a second time to his solitude on Mount Randa. There he remained for the space of seven months, always absorbed in prayer, and, according to the spirit of his legend, receiving ministry of angels. This retreat over, he undertook a journey to Rome, with the intention of persuading His Holiness to establish monasteries wherein monks should devote themselves to the acquisition and teaching of oriental languages, in order to spread the gospel and labour for the conversion of infidels. Hereof are the ardours begotten of strange characters seen on myrtle-leaves. Now, it has been affirmed that he had everything to hope from the earnestness of Honorius IV, and the greater the pity if so, for as Raymund Lully entered the gates of the Eternal City, the pontiff passed out through those of this mortal life. The journey came therefore to nothing. But Lully, as an illuminated doctor, could afford to wait, and so he revisited Paris, where he gave public lectures. On this or another occasion Duns Scotus was also there, and it fell out that the Balearic doctor found time on a day to listen as well as to teach. The Scotsman, who belongs to the immortals in the pantheon of the schools—I think, even as Lully outside it—had a great audience ; but, as to Lully, he came, he saw and he objected to some points in the other doctor's discourse. Being also a Spaniard and a man of zeal, his *negatur* there and here was accompanied by pantomimic gestures of

dissent. The incident ruffled the Scotsman, who looked with disdain at Lully, like a master at an impudent pupil, and flung at him the question which used to be put to monastic novices in the course of a catechism: *Dominus quæ pars?*—"What part is the Lord?" The answer given in the classes was: *Dominus pars hæreditatis meæ et calicis mei*—"The Lord is the part of my inheritance and my chalice." It was a jeer of Duns Scotus, suggesting that Lully was a tyro, who ought to keep silence when elders and dialecticians laid down the law in the classes. But Lully answered quietly and clearly: *Dominus non pars est sed totum*—"The Lord is not a part, but the whole." In this manner the tables were turned on his questioner, who observed that he was dealing with another manner of man than he had supposed at first. The incident closed for the moment, but when his oration was over Duns Scotus singled out Lully from the crowd, discovered who he was, and they are reported as meeting and exchanging views frequently.

Having finished his course at Paris, the Spanish doctor went to Mount Pelin, where he also taught and wrote, thence to Genoa, where it is said that he translated his *Ars Inventiva* into Arabic. It is needless to mention that there is nothing in the shape of evidence for stories of this kind. In the adventurous life of Lully, only the salient events can be called historical—by example, his pilgrimages to

Rome and his visitation of various centres to expound and defend his system. He was presently for a second time in the city of the popes with the same object in view, and again it came to nothing, through the involved condition of affairs at the Sacred Court.

It would appear that his promised apostolate passed now into the forefront of his mind, and that he felt himself fully equipped. He was at Genoa, on another visit, and made ready to embark for Africa. His books were already on board, for he went as no common missionary but as an exponent of universal science in the Name of Christ. He was himself on the point of taking passage, when he was overwhelmed with a sense of his danger, recalled his effects, and is pictured as pursued through the streets by a crowd of vagabonds, deriding his cowardice. Through shame, according to some, through remorse as others say, most probably owing to both, Raymund Lully fell sick for a third time, and on a certain Vigil of Pentecost he was carried to a Dominican Priory, where he received the last sacraments. One biographer adds that he made his will—he who had devised already or spent all. However, he recovered and embarked on the first vessel bound for Tunis. There he is pictured as holding conferences with men of learning in the law of Mahomet. Whether he confounded them utterly or only outwearied their patience, in the end he was cast into prison, and duly condemned to death. We are told, however, of one Moslem, either

impressed by his knowledge or brought to the verge of conversion, who intervened to save him. In result Lully was released and expelled the city. He is heard of next at Naples, teaching his system till Celestine V assumed the Chair of Peter, when Lully visited Rome for a third time, and at last secured the foundation of several colleges for the study of eastern tongues. The University of Paris is said also to have adopted his Short Method of acquiring knowledge. At Montpellier he was received with distinction by a General of the Franciscan Order. In a word, he was coming into his own. He is reported also at Cyprus, preaching against Nestorians and Georgians.[1] He was appealing, moreover, for help in his various enterprises to the Kings of France, Sicily and Cyprus—for the most part in vain.

The city of Paris saw him once again in or about 1308, and a year later he was in Castile, entreating Ferdinand IV to join the French King, Philippe le Bel, in a new crusade for the recovery of the Holy Land. He spelt out another failure. The old prohibition notwithstanding, he ventured again into Africa, and at Bona, otherwise Hippo, once the diocese of St. Augustine, he is affirmed to have converted seventy followers of Averroës. A little later on he was converting also at Algiers, but there a bridle was fixed in his mouth—as it is

[1] This is most probably mythical, like a journey to Jerusalem and Egypt, which Lully is said to have undertaken at the age of eighty years.

said—for the space of "forty days," after which he was beaten publicly, and expelled that region. He returned to Tunis, where sentence of death awaited him, and afterwards passed on to Bugia, meeting again with imprisonment and being again thrust out. He embarked in a Genoese vessel with his books and papers, but suffered shipwreck, and landed somehow at Pisa. There he fell sick once more, and once more was tended by Dominicans. The conversion of Mohammedans and the recovery of the Holy Land were still his chief ends. He sought also the institution of an Order of Christian Chivalry,[1] and his enthusiasm on the subject was such that it was communicated to the inhabitants of Pisa, who sent him with letters to the Sovereign Pontiff, and with a guarantee on the part of the ladies in that city to furnish considerable funds for such purpose. It was the pontificate of Clement V, and the place was not Rome but Avignon, where the Papal Court, in conspiracy with the wicked King, had a job of their own in respect of a Christian chivalry: it was the doom-day of Knights Templar. We know the kind of ears which listened—if they did listen—to this second Peter the Hermit preaching another crusade, and to this later Hugh de Payens seeking a Rule of Knighthood. It does not need to say that Lully gained nothing. He returned to

[1] It has been proposed that the end in view was the formation of a purely spiritual knighthood, which was to win its way by preaching, and not by force of arms.

Paris, and betook himself once more to lectures. Presumably an universal science offers consolation to those whose steps are dogged by failure, at least in particular schemes.[1]

There came, however, the year 1311, when a General Council of the Church was convened at Vienne, in the South of France, and thither Lully bent his steps, carrying certain theses reduced under three heads: (1) The foundation of monasteries for men willing to expose their lives in the quarrel of Christ, and to learn languages, that they might preach the Gospel far and wide. (2) The reduction of all Christian chivalries into a single Order living under one rule and inspired with one ambition, being the liberation of the Holy Places and the utter destruction of the Saracenic power.[2] (3) The condemnation of the writings of Averroës as opposed to the true religion and its doctrines. There is a story that the Council ordained colleges for languages and suppressed the heathen teaching; but it had hands to arm against heresies and battles to fight at home, so I think it more likely that Raymund Lully drew another blank in the lottery of scholastic, apostolic and religious favour. It was some years yet to the next and final drawing. Meanwhile he wrote and lectured, as it would seem,

[1] It appears otherwise to have reaped an earlier reward, for Philippe le Bel is represented as authorising a college for teaching the Lullian method at Paris in 1298. We hear also that it had apostolic approval.

[2] By love and prayer, Lully is reported as saying, by pouring out tears and blood.

more especially at Paris, till Europe was filled with his MSS., if there is any truth in the stories or any modicum of fact represented by bibliographical lists. He grew old also, and perhaps a day came when he had illustrated *Ars Lulliana* to his heart's content. He returned to Majorca and thence took ship to Tunis,[1] hoping to work secretly for the conversion of its inhabitants. He was looking for a crown perchance, the highest prize in all lotteries, as the ages of faith counted. He drew at last and won. His secret activities transpired after a certain time, as they were bound to do, or alternatively they were not secret, for according to another account he proclaimed his return boldly. In either case, there was no need for Arabian doctors or civic authorities to move against him, as the populace rose in hordes ; they pelted him out of the city, and he fell on the sea-shore, buried under a pile of stones.

Now, Raymund Lully was well known in Genoa, and it is possible that certain Genoese merchants, mentioned in all versions of his story, may have witnessed his martyrdom ; but in any case they came in the darkness to carry his body away. He was still breathing, however, and so was borne to their ship. They set sail for Majorca, and in sight of his native land the illuminated doctor carried his zeal for God beyond the fury of Mahound, and beyond

[1] Or to Bugia, says another story, i.e. Bougia, near Algiers.

the chilling preoccupations of Rome and Avignon. It was the Feast of the Martyrdom of SS. Peter and Paul, June 29, possibly in 1315, possibly three years later. We do not find his record in authorised Church Calendars ; but there are other saints than those who figure in the lists of Latin Christianity. His name is treasured still in the heart of the Balearic Isles, for whom he was and will always be the Blessed Raymund Lully.

SYMBOLICAL ILLUSTRATION
Representing the
Amalgamation of Gold with Mercury.

CHAPTER III

THE UNIVERSAL SCIENCE

WHAT was this Universal Science to which frequent allusion has been made, this *Ars Lulliana*, *Ars Magna Sciendi* and *Ars Notoria*? For either it was put forward under many names, or else there were several branches, and these were diversely entitled. Those who know anything concerning it among mystical and occult students in England have derived most probably at second-hand through Éliphas Lévi, whom I have made known by various translations. I will appeal, therefore, to him in the first instance. He affirms as follows: (1) Raymund Lully reclaimed the heritage of Solomon for that Saviour who was the Son of David. (2) He was a pre-eminent adept, the first initiate after St. John who was devoted to the hierarchic apostolate of holy orthodoxy. (3) He sought to establish an absolute and universal philosophy by substituting a fixed notion of natural actualities for the conventional abstractions of systems, and a natural simplicity of expression for the ambiguous terms of scholasticism. (4) His endeavour was to place the Christianised Kabbalah against the fatalistic *Magia* of the Arabs, Egyptian

traditions against those of India, the Magic of Light against Black Magic. (5) He foretold that the doctrine of Antichrist, to be expounded in the last days, would be a materialised realism and would be accompanied by a recrudescence of all the monstrosities connoted by the forbidden arts. (6) He sought to prepare minds for the return of Enoch, or otherwise for the final revelation of that science, the Key of which is in the hieroglyphical alphabet of Enoch, meaning that he was acquainted with the Trumps Major of the Tarot cards, and with the secret doctrine which lies behind them, according to the hypothesis of Lévi. (7) He was, therefore, a great prophet for true Kabbalists and seers. On this philosophical diagnosis we should at least agree with Lévi that Lully must be regarded as a sublime dreamer by all who can respect "exalted character and noble aspirations."

It happens, however, that the French Magus not only wrote that *History of Magic* from which I have been extracting, as well as other occult treatises, but was the author—much about the same time—of a *Dictionary of Christian Literature* in the long series of encyclopædic works under the general editorship of Abbé Migne. This volume was, as it had to be, written strictly on orthodox lines, and is exceedingly useful as such to check Lévi's occult enthusiasms, and the exaggerations into which they led him. His *Dictionary* includes an article on Raymund Lully, and he testifies as

follows therein: (1) Lully personified the mediæval search for the absolute. (2) He pretended to have invented an universal art. (3) According to his legend, he was illuminated by a ray of the universal science. (4) He preached the true religion, being that of catholic unity. It will be seen that we are on a different key, and that the Lully whom Lévi presented to the consideration of orthodox Latins is by no means the Great Master of the *History of Magic*. He is said to be an alchemist in the romance of his legend, but it is no longer suggested that he was a Kabbalist in his presentation of metaphysical science. On my own part, but in a study belonging to the far past of my literary life, I described *Ars Magna Sciendi* as (1) a mechanical introduction to knowledge, (2) an educational method, (3) a great, vacant, pretentious system which enabled those who mastered it to hold their own in all subjects of dispute.[1] At this day I should not express my findings precisely in this way, but it cannot be said that those who have come after me have done more than vary the thesis, as two examples will indicate: (1) An American writer[2] describes *Ars Magna* as "a mechanical contrivance for ascertaining all possible categories that apply to any possible proposition." (2) The eleventh edition of the

[1] *Lives of Alchemystical Philosophers*, s.v. Raymund Lully.

[2] Samuel M. Zwerner, D.D.: *Raymund Lull, First Missionary to the Moslems*. New York, 1902.

Encyclopædia Britannica[1] characterises the philosophical treatises generally as abounding with "incoherent formulæ," to which Lully held that "every demonstration in every science may be reduced." The justification of both judgments could not fail to emerge, were it possible in the present sketch to summarise the vast system, with its digest of notions by means of the Latin alphabet arranged in circles and pillars, the revolutions of alphabetical circles, the correlation of ideas established by such devices, and the alternatives of affirmation and denial. A single example will suffice from *Ars Brevis*, which was written to facilitate knowledge of *Ars Magna*. It claims to provide an answer to all questions, on the assumption that a given name or word represents a known thing. The art discovers principles by means of definitions, so that they can be used in affirmation or negation, and it establishes all possible aspects of debate under certain comprehensive headings, as, e.g., whether the given thing is that which it is, what and why it is, where it is and when, how and whose it is, and so forward, being "about it and about for evermore," in the words of Omar Khayyam.

It follows, I think, indubitably that at this day we do not need to know more largely concerning *Ars Lulliana*, however presented, digested, or extended by its author, and those who adopted his method. As G. H. Lewes said long ago, it is "a new method of dia-

[1] S.v. Raymund Lully.

lectics," and the only points in which it corresponds loosely to the panegyric of Éliphas Lévi is that it sought to demonstrate the truth of Christianity on the ground of reason, and was certainly orthodox by intention. It did not substitute a natural system of expression for the ambiguous terms of scholasticism,[1] or, if the terminology *per se* is simpler, the advantage is discounted completely by a cumbrous and artificial method. It knew nothing of Egyptian tradition, or of magic, black or white. It had no mission concerning the return of Enoch, and knew as little of his alleged " hieroglyphical alphabet " as it did of Dr. Dee's Tablets of Enoch. Finally, Raymond Lully was not acquainted with the Jewish Kabbalah, nor with any Christian adaptation thereof. It was yet a century and a half to the birth of Picus de Mirandula, so that the putative books of Esdras, Zoharic Theosophy and *Theses Kabbalisticæ* were undreamed of in Europe, so far as Christians were concerned, while the circulation of the *Zohar* among Jews themselves belongs to the closing years of the thirteenth century. It is true that a work entitled *De Auditu Kab-*

[1] I append a specimen of Lullian Latinity from *Lectura super Artem Inventivam*, about the lucidity of which my readers shall judge for themselves : *Deus est illa Potestas, in quâ Concordantia est magis remota à Contrarietate, quam omnis alia Concordantia ; in qua Potestate Concordantia non posset esse remota à Contrarietate si Contrarietas contrariaretur, ne Concordantia esset diffusa in illa Potestate in Possificans, Possificabile et Possificare ; Concordans, Concordabile et Concordare ; et ideo Contrarietas non potest contra Deum, qui est Potestas et Concordantia.*

balistico passes under the name of Lully, but Antonio Pasqual showed in the eighteenth century that it belonged to another hand, being that of some later and unknown Lullist.[1]

But if the day of the Art has passed, this is not to say that it had no office at its period. It was approved by the University of Paris, was tolerated—as it is said—by apostolic authority, when the author was yet alive, had the King of Aragon for its patron, and at the beginning of the sixteenth century it was taught in an university founded for that purpose by Ferdinand the Catholic. In one or another form its activities continued till the advent of Descartes. Lully himself is remarkable, not only for his attempt to replace the Scholastic Philosophy, but for his crusade against the peculiar Aristotelian development connected with the name of Averroës, though it must be remembered that the Stagyrite and his Arabian expositor had suffered ecclesiastical condemnation in 1210.

[1] The alternative title is an *Introduction to all the Sciences*, and, *pace* the late M. Adolphe Franck, it has nothing to do with the Secret Tradition in Jewry, though it regards the word *Kabbala* as signifying "superabounding wisdom," and as *habitus animæ rationalis ex recta ratione divinarum rerum cognitivus*. It is a kind of mental gymnastics, and follows the Lullian method of evolving truth out of alphabetical wheels.

CHAPTER IV

THE HERMETIC DOCTOR

As the legend of the original Raymund Lully is the growth of a considerable period, one of its stages represents the intervention of the second historical figure, and it comes about in this manner that the Universal Doctor is pictured as an alchemist in some of the later versions. It was the obvious resource of an uncritical time, which had to account, as it could, for the fact of Hermetic treatises written in the manner of a master—that is to say, with a high accent of authority—having come into general knowledge among students under the name of the Sage of Majorca, and pretending to be his actual work. It had scarcely entered into the mind of the period under notice that people are not responsible invariably for the books ascribed to them. The fact should be noted, however, that, so far as I have been able to trace, the intervention did little or nothing more than class Raymund Lully among adepts on the faith of the treatises in evidence. It did not magnify his legend by the addition of marvels embodying Hermetic motives, as, for example, representing the illuminated alchemist offering an Elixir of Life to Ambrosia

de Castello. It remained for Éliphas Lévi to turn the tale of a scholar, missionary and saint into a much more elaborate romance, and this is how he sets to work. (1) He begins by affirming that there were two Raymunds, the first being that Seneschal of the Balearic Isles who became "famous by his ill-starred passion for Ambrosia." He was the father of the Universal Doctor, adept and martyr. (2) This distinction serves no purpose whatever in the criticism of the whole subject, and is, moreover, utterly gratuitous. Our root-difficulty arises from the fact that the alchemical tracts are later than those of *Ars Magna Sciendi* and that otherwise on textual grounds they could not have been the work of the same hand. This is not removed by postulating an amorous father, who seems, for the rest, to have written and done nothing. (3) In his version, however, of the legend Lévi presents it in the wonted form, with variations designed to identify the two writers. (4) Ambrosia replies to her admirer's letter by a gracious dismissal of his suit to the Greek Kalends, for she bids him seek the Elixir of Life—about which she has heard—come to see her when he has found it, but live meanwhile for his own wife and children, as she will continue to do for the husband whom she loves. (5) In Lévi's words, the result of this ordinance was that Don Juan became Faust, and many years passed away. Lully loses his wife and Ambrosia her husband, but the alchemist has, to all appearance, for-

gotten the past ecstasies, being "absorbed only in his sublime work." (6) At last, however, he visits her, a bald and emaciated old man, holding a phial filled with "a bright and ruddy elixir." (7) She has remained in his imagination always young and beautiful, so he fails to recognise her, who has grown old as he has. (8) Having made herself known, he offers her the draught on his knees, pleading that it represents thirty years of his life, and he has proved by experience that it is indeed the wine of immortality. (9) She holds a mirror before him, bidding him look therein and see that his elixir is powerless to restore lost youth. (10) Lully recoils, having never—as we are assured—seen himself thus in a glass during all his researches. (11) Ambrosia bears witness that she on her own part would not wish to immure him in the body of an infirm old man, and he also must spare her; his elixir prolongs only the night of the tomb, but she aspires to immortality. (12) Thereupon he casts down the phial, crying that—having drunk thereof—he must remain in prison for her. (13) She has shown him also her breast, thus transferring the period of her disease from days of youth and beauty to those of age and widowhood. (14) Raymund Lully goes away weeping, and some few months later a monk of the Order of St. Francis assists Ambrosia de Castello in her last moments, which monk is the alchemist.

According to Lévi, the romance ends at this point, and, though it has a striking dramatic

situation, I fear that some of its embroideries belong to the order of tinsel. The legend is said to follow, and "endows the repentant alchemist with several centuries of existence and expiation." When he should have died "naturally" he endures the agonies of dissolution but returns invariably to life. He had hoped something from the dagger of his Mohammedan servant, but there was no release in wounds. Indeed, at the long last the martyr of Tunis or Bugia expires only in virtue of being liberated miraculously by the act of God Himself. Those who are familiar with Eliphas Lévi's method know *a priori* that this version of "Raymund Lully's Great Elixir" is his own and no other's; but it may satisfy some if I tell them, after searching all the records, that there is no trace of its variant episodes prior to 1860, nor was Lévi acquainted with it himself when he wrote his *Dictionary*. It was invented on the spur of the moment, a little time later, for the benefit of his *History of Magic*. We must, therefore, look further, and see what can be ascertained from less fabulous sources concerning the first namesake of the Universal Doctor.

Of such, in the meantime, are occult elixirs when a French hierophant puts them up in phials of Faerie, for better for worse. It has to be said that his precursors in Lullian biography had even less scruples, but they took out their spurious licences in leaden inventions. The question before us is how it came about

that the original Raymund Lully obtained a reputation in alchemy, with texts fathered upon him which hold a position of high, almost the highest, importance in the canon of Hermetic literature. It was not that his legend, by a process of normal growth in the world of mediæval myth, collected such accretions about him, and, having clothed him in the robes of an alchemist, produced alchemical books in his name, to verify the myth. There were accretions enough collected, but they were not of metallic transmutation, and not of the great elixir. That which came to pass, on the contrary, was intervention on the part of a personality about whom we know nothing for certain, and are likely to learn nothing, except that he produced numerous alchemical works in the name of Lully, taking such precautions in their making that several uncritical generations have accepted him at his own word in the matter of the false attribution. It follows that we are not dealing with a fraudulent or blundering label, but with forged documents. In a word, Lully the alchemist said that he was Raymund Lully of the Balearic Isles. The hypothesis of a second Lully, who was a Jewish "neophyte," or what not, is very little more than reverie, or—if one prefers to say so—a gratuitous explanation hazarded in the eighteenth century. We shall see later on its modicum of ground in fact. A line of less resistance might have remembered that when the Seneschal of Majorca changed his life and

entered a particular path of illumination, he is said to have been already the father of children, and that two out of the three were boys. Having established this point of fact, it could then have brought forward the Hermetic texts, with their peculiar claim upon authorship, and offered them as proofs that there were not only sons born to the seneschal but that one of them followed in his father's footsteps by entering another path of illumination, being that of occult adeptship. We should have, in this case, a genuine Lully certifying to his name in the texts and to his Balearic origin. It is curious that this speculative possibility has not been translated into certitude and rigorous historical fact, after the manner of occult writers, but they have seen no reason to disturb the claim which identified the alchemist with the author of *Ars Magna*. The speculation itself I will leave on my own part by observing that it would have been confronted by several difficulties arising out of the texts themselves, their dates, dedications and claims; but it would have passed well in occult circles, and would have served better than the idle distinction advanced by Eliphas Lévi. It is, of course, to be ignored utterly, as there is no particle of evidence to warrant it, were other difficulties removed.

CHAPTER V

AN HISTORICAL RESEARCH

WHILE it has been affirmed very often that the alchemical texts are things of fabulous ascription, that they are the work of another Raymund, and so forth, I am acquainted with no serious criticism and no evidence put forward to warrant this view. The editor of the *Opera Omnia* devotes forty folio pages of preliminary expatiation to prove that there is a veritable Art of Alchemy and that the Blessed Martyr wrote the Hermetic tracts ascribed to him ; but the considerations have no demonstrative value. The position in an opposite sense is almost precisely similar as regards the mammoth *Vita* which appears in *Acta Sanctorum* [1] : it deals exhaustively with the fraudulent ascription of alchemical writings, but has no evidential force. I propose for the first time, by an examination of the tracts themselves, to show that, whoever he was, the Lully of Hermetic fame is not the Raymund Lully who was born at Palma and earned a martyr's death at Tunis, or otherwhere, in or about 1315. It is, however, and before all

[1] See *Editio Novissima* (1867), vol. xxvii, pp. 581 *et seq.*

things, to be observed that his editors—on the faith of his own testimony and he therefore himself—have taken every precaution to make it appear that he was. When the time came for *Testamentum Raymundi Lullii*—a most important alchemical memorial—to appear in print, the editorial preliminaries describe its author as great in philosophy, a master in sacred theology, a divinely inspired doctor and an organ of the Holy Spirit. In a word, he was *Doctor Illuminatus.* So also the available texts, taken together, with a few unimportant exceptions, claim to be the work of Raymund Lully the Majorcan, and seek to make the point evident (1) by incidental devices, as, e.g., the exhibition of an anxious concern in the conversion of the heathen; (2) by imitating the method and reproducing the peculiar machinery of *Ars Magna* and its connections, the result being a series of texts which must be called *sui generis,* so far as alchemical literature is concerned; (3) by references to historical personalities who were contemporaries of the original Lully. The *Testamentum,* for example, quotes another great alchemist, namely, Arnoldus de Villanova, while a further tract, entitled *Experimenta Raymundi Lullii Majoricani Philosophi Doctissimi,* includes an exceedingly long process, which is said to have been discovered by Arnold. It is concerned with the fixation of a certain oil, the secret of which was communicated to Lully by his brother-adept. The

approximate dates of Arnold are A.D. 1245–1310, so that the original Raymund was alive at his birth and survived him by a few years. He is of uncertain nationality, but in the later part of his life he lived under the patronage of the King of Naples and Sicily, and the suggestion would be that the two *adepti* became acquainted with each other during the course of Lully's visit to Naples, where he remained apparently for a considerable time.

On the surface it is obvious I have been enumerating colourable grounds for the identification of the two writers, but in reality I have cleared the issues, that we may know where we are in respect of the personality who is masked in the Hermetic texts, and the class to which they belong in that problematical literature of sixteen hundred years. It will serve as a further clearance to illustrate in a few lines the position adopted by the author of *Ars Magna* on the subject of alchemy in texts the authenticity of which has not, I believe, been questioned. (1) In *Liber de Potestate Infinita* there arises a question whether alchemy is a true science, and the answer follows that it is not: *Quia creatura non est.* (2) The *Liber Proverbiorum* lays down that in any given metal no other is latent, which seems fatal to the Hermetic hypothesis. (3) According to *Liber de Ente Reali, alchemia figmentum est,* the reason given being that the actives and passives of elements cannot be changed from one to another species. (4) So also, according

to *Liber Chaos*, there is no artificial transmutation of one matter or form, or of one essence into another. The dogmatic attitude of the *Doctor Illuminatus* is, therefore, at complete variance with the adept findings of the *Doctor Hermeticus*.

I proceed now to a fuller consideration of the alchemical texts at large, and the first point which arises is that of their own evidence in respect of dates. We are confronted, in the first place, by the fact that, albeit the printed works would occupy a volume of considerable dimensions in collected form, they constitute only a small proportion of the entire output. In his boundless devotion the editor of *Opera Omnia* produced a *Catalogus Librorum Beati Raymundi Lullii* which, in respect of *Pars I, continens titulos Librorum Speculativorum*, extends to 205 items, and in respect of *Pars II, continens titulos Librorum Practicorum*, includes no less than seventy-seven treatises on alchemy, a few of which would seem to be commentaries on Arnold and the Hermetic St. Thomas Aquinas. It appears, therefore, that as Lully the elder had works by the score and hundred ascribed to him falsely, so had the alchemist, who wrote in his name, at least some mythical treatises foisted on him ; but we cannot adjudicate, Lully alchemical MSS. being few in England. As regards those which have been printed, there are one or two minor items which may not be above challenge in respect of their attribution, but they do not happen to affect the present

inquiry. The dates of the MSS., according to their own testimony, may be collected thus: (1) [*Commentarium super*] *Testamentum Primum Arnoldi de Villanova*, said to be *datum in civitate Parisiorum, anno* 1273. (2) *Lucidarium Totius Testamenti*, the colophon of which reads: *Finitus est iste Liber in præclaro studio Montis Possulani, anno* 1330. (3) *Liber Naturæ et Lumen nostri Lapidis*, 1338. (4) *Liber Angelorum de Conservatione Vitæ Humanæ et de Quinta Essentia*; the colophon reads: *Factus est hic Liber anno* 1349. (5) *Liber ad Serenissimam Reginam Eleanoram Uxorem Serenissimi Regi Eduardi*, 1355. (6) *Quatuor Libri Angelorum Testamenti Experimentorum* (sic), *anno salutis* 1357. It will be observed that they embrace a period of eighty-four years. Among printed works the tract on Experiments is dated, the last words affirming that it was completed in 1330. So also the *Epistola de Lapide Benedicto* is said to have been transmitted to an English King in 1412, thus extending the output of Hermetic writings to nearly one hundred and forty years.[1] The last date may, however, be a typographical error. In any case the chronology of the texts cited is decisive on the question of authorship, for the first only is referable to a period when the original Lully was alive.

The allusion to an English Queen Eleanor

[1] The Latin texts will be found in several alchemical collections, e.g., in Mangetus: *Bibliotheca Chemica Curiosa*, 1702.

opens another field of research. It will be remembered that she was the wife of Edward I, who ascended the throne in 1272, and died in 1307. He was thus a contemporary of the original Raymund Lully during his entire reign. Let us mark, however, in virtue of what hypothesis an alchemical tract was dedicated to the royal lady in question. In his *Compendium Animæ Transmutationis* Lully the alchemist claims to have visited England at the request of a King Edward. The statement appears in both recensions of the text, different as they otherwise are, and there are references elsewhere to the same monarch. So also in the tract on Experiments, to which I have referred already, the writer affirms that he performed transmutation according to the method of Arnold for an English King. The words are: *Hoc operati sumus pro Rege Anglico, qui finxit se contra Turcam pugnaturum, et postea contra Regem Galliæ pugnavit, meque incarceravit, et tandem evasi. Caveas ergo, tibi fili, ab his.* That is to say: "We performed this transmutation" —namely, that of Villanova, *a quo dicti olei fixationem percepimus*—"for the English King, who pretended that he would go to fight against the Turk, but what he did subsequently was to make war on the King of France, and cast me into prison, though I contrived to escape. Beware, my son, lest you go and do likewise." The alleged fact of a visit to England is affirmed otherwise in the colophons of three alchemical MSS. It is said: (1) In the *Liber Naturæ:*

Fecimus in Sancta Catharina Londini, 1337; (2) In *Liber ad Reginam Eleanoram: Factus Londini in Sancta Catharina,* 1355; and (3) In *Quatuor Libri Testamenti: Fecimus in Sancta Ecclesia Divæ Catharinæ Londini, anno salutis* 1357. If these dates are accurate it will be seen that they signify a sojourn in England of at least twenty-two years. There was further an *Opus Abbreviatum super Solem et Lunam,* which claims to have been done in St. Catharine's, but a date is not given in the colophon. The hospital in question, which stood upon Tower Hill, on the East of the Tower itself, was built originally by Matilda of Boulogne in 1148, and was not finally demolished till 1827.

Before examining the chronology established by the Lully alchemical texts, it is necessary to make a brief excursion in another direction because it happens that the memorials of the Hermetic adept are not confined to his own writings. The independent source of information is found in a tract called *The Testament* of Cremer the Englishman, Abbot of Westminster and Friar of the Benedictine Order. It was first published by Michael Maier, *circa* 1614, in a collection entitled *Tripus Aureus,* and there is no question that it belongs to the worst and most negligible class of alchemical texts, as well as the most pretentious in its form of presentation. It has, however, a kind of prolegomenon, sketching the history of the author in his search after the

Great Work, but apart from all dates. He affirms (1) that he wasted thirty years over books which had no other ingenuity than that of expressing thought in unintelligible language; (2) that he was inspired ultimately by Divine Providence to undertake a journey into Italy; (3) that he was accepted as a pupil by "that noble and marvellously learned Master Raymund," with whom he remained a long time; (4) that the said Raymund gave him a partial instruction in the Great Mystery; (5) that he accompanied him to England and lived with him for two years; (6) that during this stay Raymund instructed Cremer in the whole secret of the work; (7) that Cremer introduced his Master to King Edward, who received him kindly and honourably; (8) that Raymund promised inexhaustible wealth to his Majesty, on the condition that he would undertake personally a crusade against the Turks, and should refrain thenceforward from making war on other Christian nations; (9) that the King violated his part of the contract; and (10) that Cremer's Master had to fly beyond seas. The account ends by expressing an earnest longing to behold the adept once more, and by assuring the "most blessed Raymund" that the Abbot and his monastic brethren pour out their prayers daily on their benefactor's behalf.

It would seem, therefore, that we have an important independent witness to the claims of Lully the alchemist respecting his own

powers as an adept of Hermetic Science and the circumstances under which he gave proof of them in England. Moreover, there is very good reason—although it is of an indirect kind—to believe that the Testament of Cremer belongs to the genuine remains of Hermetic antiquity in this country. We know that Michael Maier had visited England early in the seventeenth century and that he returned to Germany with a copy of Norton's *Ordinal of Alchemy*, written in English doggerel verse and included subsequently by Elias Ashmole in *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum*, 1652. Maier translated his copy into Latin, and it appeared in *Tripus Aureus*, together with the tract of Cremer, also in that tongue. I am satisfied that he carried back also the English text of the latter document and that it was almost certainly in verse, though it is extant now only in the Latin rendering of Maier. We know otherwise of Cremer, whose poem entitled *Hermes' Bird* is printed in Ashmole's collection. It claims to be translated from the French and to have been written by his Master. Cremer's version is inscribed to him in the final verse "with humble affection," beseeching him of his "mercy and pity" to be compassionate towards "this rude making," which he places under his correction. As, in Ashmole's words, Cremer was "scholar in this science to Raymund Lully," [1] it follows that the

[1] It should be observed that Cremer never refers to his teacher otherwise than as Raymund only.

latter was the author of *Hermes' Bird*, although it is an anonymous text and there is no trace of it otherwise among his published writings. It would seem, therefore, that Cremer is not a fictitious personality, and that we have—as I have said—a valuable testimony borne in England to the truth of the story told concerning himself by a writer bearing or assuming the name of Raymund Lully.[1]

We shall reach a little later on what I must call a tentative conclusion about this part of my subject. Meanwhile, having put the Cremer evidence in the most favourable light, it remains to be said that no person bearing this name ever filled the position of Abbot at any period during the history of Westminster Abbey. Ashmole, who credited the ascription, had failed evidently to consult the Roll of this ecclesiastical foundation. We are in the presence, therefore, of another document which is fraudulent in respect of authorship and the connotations of this claim, whatever its consequence otherwise. Recurring to the Lullian texts, we have seen that their alleged dates exclude the idea that they were written by the author of *Ars Magna*, not to speak further of his verdict on the whole alchemical subject. Those also which specify a visit to England are to be set aside for that reason.

[1] The report of Lully's visit became current of course among later alchemists in England. He was supposed to have transmuted metals in the Tower itself. See William Camden's *Remains*, any edition, s.v. *Money*.

It is entirely certain that the real Raymund Lully was at no time in this country. I have given his itinerary at length, as it is laid out by those biographers who knew nothing of his alleged Hermetic connections. The two personalities are distinguished by this fact, and they are distinguished much further as we proceed to sift the texts. Edward I is the only King of that name who was married to an Eleanor, so that he and no other is intended by such allusions as *propter intercessionem domini Regis Eduardi illustrissimi.* But Edward I was never at war with France, as affirmed in the other statement, cited previously: *Et postea contra Regem Gallicæ pugnavit.* Moreover, Queen Eleanor died in 1291 and her consort in 1307: how, therefore, did he imprison the putative Raymund, or cause him to fly beyond seas, when, according to his colophons, the adept was writing alchemical texts in the Hospital of St. Catharine for the twenty years between 1337 and 1357? How came he also to address a tract to Queen Eleanor in 1355, when she had been dead for a period approaching seventy years? From confusion to worse confusion it will be seen that our quest goes on. It is complicated by other dedications, and especially to a certain Robert, who is usually described in the titles as King of the English, and who, by the testimony of *Epistola Lapidis Benedicti*, was continually writing to the alchemist. The custom of the latter was to send him texts in reply, usually depending on

the good offices of King Edward, acting as intermediary and transmitting, presumably after perusal. The *Testamentum*, *Codicillum* and other writings are assumed to have travelled in this way. The *Epistola*, on the other hand, seems to have been *missa ab ipso*, as if from the author direct, in the year 1412. The King Robert referred to is evidently Robert Bruce, who was crowned at Scone in 1306, and died in 1329. The relations between him and Edward I were those of a twelve-month war, ending with the death of the latter. He was succeeded by Edward II, who for seven subsequent years was rioting with his favourite Gaveston. In 1314, so far from transmitting manuscripts to Robert Bruce, he was suffering at his hands the heavy defeat of Bannockburn, after which he rioted again, till he was forced—as every one knows—to resign the crown in 1327. It is obvious that we are in a chaos of mendacity, and that there was no communication in fact between King Robert Bruce of Scotland and the alchemist who called himself Raymund Lully: the texts which testify to the contrary are lying witnesses. It remains to add that Bruce is the only Robert of Scotland who was contemporary with an English Edward. In like manner, when we find a *Testamentum Novissimum* dedicated to "King Charles" by "Raymund Lully the Majorican," the reference is either to Charles le Bel, who reigned in France from 1322 to 1328, or alternatively Charles VII, the con-

temporary of Edward IV, each ascending his throne in 1461, and each dying in 1483.

Two things follow from this investigation: (1) That the dates and other alleged facts which are found in the alchemical texts prove that they were written subsequently to the death of the original Raymund Lully in 1315; (2) that they are not alone fraudulent in their claims upon the *Doctor Illuminatus*, but in their historical pretensions otherwise. Elias Ashmole states as a matter of certitude that the English King for whom Lully transmuted base metal into gold—*melius omni auro minerali*—was Edward III, but he offers no evidence, and there is none in the *Testament* of Cremer, whose story, it may be added, is at issue with that of the false Lully in one point at least. The adept affirms that he visited England at the solicitation of King Edward, but according to the *Testament* he repaired here in Cremer's company and on being introduced to the King was received kindly, but not—it would seem—as an expected guest. The long reign of Edward III would correspond with the dates in most colophons of the texts supposed to have been written at St. Catharine's. It has the air of corresponding also with the period of that so-called Jewish neophyte who has been brought forward as true author of the alchemical works. He is described as Raimundo de Tárraga, an Israelite who embraced the Christian faith, a partisan of the occult sciences, a writer on the secrets of nature, the transmutation of metals

and possibly on the invocation of demons. The authority is Fabricius.[1] I can find nothing extant under the name of the Israelite, and the sole evidence to connect him with the Lullian texts is apparently that more than fifty years after the death of the Illuminated Doctor he bore the name of Raymund. We can add, if we like, that the *Compendium Animæ Transmutationis*—second recension—refers to a treatise on Magic by the same author.

My conclusion is that the literary mask who produced sheafs of documents under the name of Lully may have also gone about in that name, and may have visited England. There is something, I think, behind the story of Cremer, though he is also a mask; and, behind all the inventions of their setting, it is barely possible that pseudo-Lully's reiterated allusions to this visit may not be all invention. So far back as 1555 Robertus Constantinus [2] affirmed that he had been shown a coin of very pure gold, under the name of a Raymund noble which had been struck from the precious metal manufactured by Lully in the Tower of London. We hear also in Stow's *Survey* of a work on alchemy written by the adept in St. Catharine's Hospital. It would look as if the last word had not been said upon the whole subject.

[1] See J. Ramon de Luanco: *Ramon Lull considerado como Alquimista.* Barcelona, 1870.

[2] *Nomenclator Insignium Scriptorum*, R. Constantino Authore. Parisiis, 1555.

CHAPTER VI

THE SCIENCE OF ALCHEMY

It is indubitable that works of fraudulent ascription and otherwise fictitious in story are likely to be regarded as worthless in all their claims. Assuming, let us say, on the present position of chemistry, that there is something to be urged for the dreams and even the occasional discoveries of old alchemists, those texts of the literature which come forward under false warrants must belong—it will be thought—to the dregs of the subject. There could be no more reasonable view, and yet it should be received with caution. We are dealing with a subject which is at once difficult and elusive. The history of alchemy is, in the first place, a history of fabulous ascriptions. I will not speak of those which are met with in the Byzantine literature, which, in addition to Isis—addressing her son Horus—and Hermes, include Moses, Plato, Aristotle, Democritus, Porphyry and other names by the score among "the makers of gold." It follows that the literature began in imposture of this kind and so continued for more than a thousand years. The *Turba Philosophorum* is perhaps the earliest of Latin texts, and among

the *dramatis personæ* of its convention are Anaxagoras, Aristæus, Pythagoras, Parmenides, Socrates and Zeno, not to speak of Moses the Lawgiver, already mentioned. The Latin tracts which pass under the name of Geber, and are of highest authority by the common consent of adeptship, are also fraudulent, bearing practically no likeness to the genuine writings of the Arabian Djâber. In later times St. Thomas Aquinas, Albertus Magnus and Pope John XXII were credited as alchemists on the faith of spurious treatises, put forward under their names. The books ascribed to Nicolas Flamel are as dubious as his traditional history. But we are already beyond the epoch of Lully, the Illuminated Doctor, and the enumeration, which might be continued, would serve no further purpose. Either the ascriptions which we regard justly as fraudulent were not so considered, or there was a reason which does not appear on the surface. Alchemy was a secret science, and from the Middle Ages onward those who pursued it had to reckon, on the one side, with the hostility of official religion, and on the other with the greed of princes. I do not wish to exaggerate this aspect of the question, because I do not see that alchemy was ever in the same category as Witchcraft, Sorcery and Black Magic. Yet the professional alchemist, it is certain, paraded his *métier* at his personal peril. He had good reason, therefore, to hide himself, and this fact may account for his records appearing under assumed names. He

chose those of the past, and, the better to conceal himself, he selected great names of antiquity. Here is my first plea for suspended judgment.

We have, moreover, the evidence of the literature as to a valid reason, otherwise, for concealment. I suggest that the mediæval alchemist effaced himself because he had something to hide, and this leads to my second plea. It is not certain what was concealed under the pretence of transmuting metals. If we assume that the alchemist was at work on physics and was hoping, literally and actually, to make gold out of putative base metals, we do not know what doors he may have opened occasionally unawares; but modern discoveries indicate where they might lead and the terrible forces which he might sometimes unloose in ignorance, apart from all controlling power. But if, on the other hand, as certain texts in the literature seem to indicate, some of the alchemists were not working on physics, but following a mystic quest, there is, I suppose, no need to say that the reasons for secrecy and self-effacement might be yet more cogent. And it is notable, in this connection, that when the power of Rome, though by no means broken, was reduced at the Reformation, a change appears upon the face of Hermetic history. The texts of alchemy remain as cryptic as before, but its professors come forward, as from Paracelsus onward. To conclude on this part of my subject, I do not think that the forged ascriptions and the false history in the

writings of Raymund Lully are an adequate warrant for ruling out of hand that there can be nothing of Hermetic importance in his works themselves. I remember another and much more pregnant fact—that the head-text of Christian mystical, as apart from occult, literature in the West was not only put forward—as we should say—fraudulently under the name of Dionysius the Areopagite, but has come down to us accompanied by a letter from the same hand, embodying a mendacious claim on the writer's personal knowledge of apostolic events. And yet the Dionysian *Treatise on Mystical Theology* is the fount of Christian Mysticism and could only have been written by one who knew the deep inward states through which the soul is led back to God.

We are told by Louis Figuier [1] that the alchemical texts passing under the name of Lully show that we are indebted to their author for (1) the preparation of carbonate of potassium by means of tartar and wood-ashes, (2) the rectification of spirits of wine, (3) the preparation of essential oils, (4) the cupellation of silver and (5) the preparation of sweet mercury. The statements may be left to stand at their value. Figuier was a chemist, and should know; but he was an utterly inexact writer, and, if he is correct in saying that these preparations and so forth are heard of for the first time in the texts under notice, it does not follow that they, or all of them, were discovered

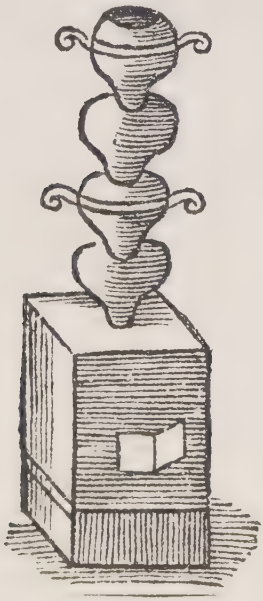
[1] See *L'Alchimie et les Alchimistes.*

by Raymund Lully. However this may be, it is not on these grounds that the pseudonymous Hermetic philosopher is enthroned so highly by the artists and amateurs who followed him, but as a great and inspired Master of their Catholic and Royal Art or Science. He was of those who expounded its principles, propounded its definitions and set forth its theory and practice with an accent of plenary authority, and therefore he carried conviction. In the absence so far of a valid canon of criticism to lift the heavy veils of symbolism which envelope the Art, we cannot establish otherwise the grounds of their respect; but the peculiar Lullian method, recalling *Ars Magna*, may have contributed thereto. Lully's *Testament* defines Alchemy as that part of natural occult philosophy which teaches how to restore human bodies to perfect health, to purify all imperfect precious stones and to transmute every metallic body into true silver, but afterwards into true gold, by means of one universal medicinal body into which all particular medicines can be reduced, the same being accomplished by one manual regimen revealed to the true Sons of Philosophy. The *Compendium* says that the Stone of the Philosophers is generated or compounded by artifice, and that the matter thereof is a metallic soul and rectified menstruum, otherwise the sperm of metals. In the *Elucidation* of an alternative *Testament* we are told that there are three stones, Mineral, Animal and Vegetable, though it is added that this

notwithstanding " the Stone of our Art is one." It is apparently a trinity in unity, or body, corresponding to the so-called Mineral Stone; soul, being the Animal Stone; and spirit, a Vegetable Stone, thus termed because it grows and multiplies. Herein, it is affirmed, there lies hidden the whole Mastery, being Sun, Moon and Water of Life. The last is that life of bodies by which the Stone is vivified, and this it is which is called by innumerable names in Alchemy. According to the *Epistola Accurationis* the Stone is Mercury, the superfluities of which are removed but nothing is added thereto. A Sulphur is conjoined therewith and therein also is the Water of Life. It follows that the Stone is no common Mercury, and this is shown in the *Clavicula*. So also the Sulphur, as explained in the *Codicillum*, is to be understood as a " seminal moisture." Finally, the generation or composition of the Stone postulates four things, being Mercury, Sulphur, natural heat and that which is termed Spirit of the Quintessence, otherwise, Soul of the Elements and the form of these.

I have collected these intimations so that those who are unacquainted with alchemical literature may have a notion of its symbolical language, as found in the Lullian texts, and that others who are students of the subject may observe that this language is like that of the chief adepts. It is impossible to pursue the subject, but, as one who has been concerned with the historical side of the literature and

sporadic points of its symbolism for a considerable number of years, I am certain that its vast body of symbolism has a real meaning behind it, that it represents a research pursued through many centuries, and that the putative Raymund Lully is one of the important witnesses. I shall hold that his position as a great Hermetic Master is affected by the mendacity of his external claims when I reject the *Tract on Mystical Theology* by pseudo-Dionysius for the same reason.



ALCHEMICAL APPARATUS
For Sublimation.

CHAPTER VII

THE MYSTICAL DOCTOR

Let us recur in the mind for a moment to that maker of bizarre methods and Master of Sentences, who was not Peter Lombard but the original Lully, and who has left us such samples of super-valid qualification as *possificans*, *possificabile et possificare*, which no one can put into English, not to speak of the Pandora's Box of his alphabets, with truth very much at the bottom and almost past finding out. *Ars Inventiva*, *Ars Demonstrativa* and *Ars Generalis* are colossi built up with the whole will and the whole force of him who conceived them, and woe be to those who should take them to pieces as analysts and then seek to rebuild them, amidst the scattermeal of modern distractions. It has been said by unflinching biographers that one thousand extant works stood to the credit of Lully's name in the fifteenth century; the *Acta Sanctorum* reduced them to something over three hundred: but, as one who stoops to moderation, the Mayence editor of *Opera Omnia* produces a list of 205 items, cited at length by name and excluding those on Alchemy. The things that he actu-

ally published are described as *ex omnibus terrarum orbis partibus jam collecta*,[1] but they do not reach a third of this conservative and yet distracted estimate. Whether the Lullian school produced all its theses under the name of its Master I do not know; but, so far as the vast lists represent actual texts, it is certain that their allocation is fantastic.

In respect of "the whole works" and certain editions of individual tracts, my thesis is that they indicate the probable existence of yet a third personality, another Blessed Raymund, who is after the manner of a Mystical Doctor. I have no axe to grind concerning him; he has no historical side and offers nothing to criticism on points of fact. Should anyone qualified to speak protest that this sage pseudonymous is after all the Illuminated Doctor in another mood of wisdom, he may have it that way if he please, even though I distrust the judgment. The one shall be comparable to William Sharp writing reams against time for the *Athenæum* and *Academy*, but the other shall be Fiona Macleod, of rare and fragrant memory. The texts are before us out of which both arise, and in the last resource I am concerned with their comparative content rather than how they arose and passed into printed form, having the name of Lully upon them.

[1] Oxford is rich in MSS., alchemical and otherwise, and also in printed texts. See J. M. Batista y Roca: *Catàlech de les obras Lulianes d'Oxford*, 1916. See also Juan Avinyó: *El Terciari Francesca Beat Ramón Lull*, 1912. An elaborate bibliography reduces the works to 125.

The prologue of *Arbor Philosophiæ Amoris*, which I will translate as the *Tree of Love* rather than of its philosophy, betrays, as I think, incautiously, the fact that it is a simulated text by saying that Raymund, sojourning at Paris in the hope of accomplishing a great good by means of knowledge, had failed to bring it about, and reflecting therefore within him it had seemed possible subsequently that he might encompass his object after another manner—namely, by means of love. Hence the Tree of his discourse, which is all of the Lover and Beloved, methodised strangely. If I speak my mind concerning it, I must call it ripples on the surface of the great subject, and it does not suggest the deeps. The Blessed Virgin Mary is enthroned as the Supreme Lady of Love. It is claimed that this book was finished in October 1298.

There is also *De Amico et Amate*, The Book of the Lover and Beloved, which is described in the sub-title as canticles of love in the form of dialogue, for the increase of understanding and devotion. There is no need to say that it is modelled on *The Song of Solomon*, and if it is rather like an imitation in wax we must remember that the simple Latin of the schools was not a very good medium for the communication of fire and ecstasy. The Beloved is Christ, and the Friend or Lover is the soul. The Queen of Heaven presents to the Friend her Divine Son, that he may kiss His feet, and commands him to dwell on the virtues of the

Mother of his Beloved—her, the very perfect Lady. I do not observe that the ordinance is obeyed outside the paragraph which records it. Of the Beloved it is said that He dwells in a House which is nobler than all the nobilities, but He is seen rather in the Lover's languishings and tears. The latter is pictured throughout in the state of desire and longing, not in that of attainment. "Say, O fool of love, which is the more apparent—the Beloved in the Friend or the Friend in the Beloved? And the Friend answered: It is by love that one beholds the Beloved, but the Friend is recognised by his sighs, prostrations and anguishes." Or again: "The Beloved demanded: Have you seen My Lover?—What is Thy Lover's token?—My Lover is bold and timid, rich and poor, sad and joyful: he proceeds tranquilly in meditation; he is sick with love." It is a spiritual sickness which carries the seeds of healing and is not to be exchanged for anything less precious than itself. "They said unto the Friend: Will you take another Beloved? But the Friend answered: Where is one better or more noble? He is the Supreme God; He is eternal and infinite in His goodness and power, His wisdom, love and affection." Perhaps the most pregnant intimation is that which I give last. "They said unto the Lover: Where go you? He answered: There where the Beloved is.—Whence come you?—I come from where my Beloved is.—When will you go back?—I will remain with my Beloved.—

How long will you tarry?—So long as my thoughts are in Him."

It follows in the metaphysics of the ardour that the love-object is within the loving subject, that the mode of realisation is a certain thinking in the heart, that it is not a quest performed by the travelling of aspiration and desire through any intellectual distance from earth to heaven, and that the attainment—so far as Lully had conceived it—was a state reached in the soul by an inward finding of the Everlasting Presence. This is how I understand the canticle, by an inference from things that are said shortly, reaching back to implicits reposing in the writer's mind, rather than passing into expression. If the method—as I think—is valid, it has to be added that this is the root-matter of mystical experience, from which all its states unfold, and that which is highest in the records depends as much therefrom as that which is lowest. It must be added that there is nothing in *De Amico et Amate* to suggest that the witness had explored in experience the heights of his own doctrine: it is essentially a book of the path, and its characteristic in respect of the term is that of occasional intuition and not the estate of vision. The message also halts rather curiously and proceeds limping, for he who delivers it is afraid of his own symbolism. We have therefore the Friend, who is man, and the Beloved, Who is the Man Christ Jesus, whereas in the rationality of the Lover and Beloved formula the soul is

always feminine in respect of the spirit. The formula has its difficulties, and we know where it led the extravagant makers of images, of whom Francis Rouse is an example; but those who adopt it must abide by what it involves. In fine, as to this text, if we suppose for a moment that it is the work of the original Lully, and belonging as such to the last years of the thirteenth century, it is the first text in Christian mystical literature which makes use of the suggestive symbolism, or, if not the first, it was preceded only by *Arbor Philosophiæ Amoris*, a work of the same hand. The inspiration and its sacramental form belong to Sufi literature[1]; not that the writer drank deeply from those sources, but he had heard something, had read a little, and took a counsel of caution from its intimacies and liberal licence, as a result of which Islamic poets and mystics fell into a riot of symbolism on the analogies between Mysteries of Divine Love and the earthly union of lover and beloved in flesh.

The Book of the Lover and Beloved was originally one of several treatises brought into the text of a work entitled *Blanquerna*, which has been described variously as the great allegory of the Middle Ages, a predecessor of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, a social novel, a Utopia, a religious romance and the autobiography of Raymund Lully. It was written originally

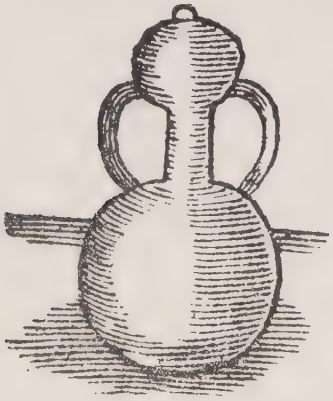
[1] The fact is specified in *Blanquerna*, but perhaps the last person to have borrowed from Sufism was "the first missionary to the Moslems."

in Catalan and has remained therein, three treatises introduced into the narrative excepted, and these have been put into Latin. One is on Election, the second is *De Amico et Amate* and the third is an *Art of Contemplation*, comprised in two books. Part of this work is moral, didactic, theological, but substance and essence are mystic, being concerned with the ascent of the soul to God and the state of Divine Union attained by way of perfect love. It is of particular importance as alluding in fine to a mode of contemplation based on personal experience and, like all such experience, incapable of expression in language. We may compare the high intimations of this treatise with the vast *Liber Contemplationis in Deum*, which fills two great volumes of *Opera Omnia*, and is exceedingly formal, though it has its deeper moments. It belongs as such to the original Raymund Lully.[1]

So far concerning the Mystical Doctor. Whether or not he was distinct from him of *Ars Magna*, he is most certainly to be separated with the latter from the dubious *Doctor Hermeticus*, and is the only one of the three who has vestiges of living interest for us at this day. Beyond methodised arts of thought, the vic-

[1] The fact that *Blanquerna*, with the texts embodied therein, is in the language of the original Raymund offers a certain difficulty to the criticism which suggests that it is not his work. My tentative and qualified hypothesis is based on the mentality of the mystical works, contrasted with that of *Ars Magna* and the other unquestioned monuments of the Universal Science.

tories of debate, the clouds of categories and distinctions, he emerges into the light of another region, where the sun of the soul is God. It may be well for those, if any, who read and understand concerning *possificans, possificabile et possificare,* with the *Doctor Illuminatus*; who can say with the *Doctor Hermeticus: Est in Mercurio quicquid quaerunt sapientes*; but after these shibboleths there is the word of the Mystical Doctor, and that word is *Unitas.*



ALCHEMISTICAL APPARATUS:
A Pelican.

CORNELIVS
HENRICVS
AGRIPPA AB
NEDTESHEYM

CORNELIUS AGRIPPA
OCCULT PHILOSOPHER

CHAPTER I

THE AGRIPPA OF LEGEND

The passage of time inevitably associates the personalities of famous men with the legendary and the marvellous. Repeated coats of traditional varnish are applied to their portraits, obscuring the very lineaments and rendering minor details of colouring and expression matters of conjecture. Biographical distortion and amplification are confined to no period, as our own bears witness, but, familiar as is the process, few reputations have suffered so greatly from the perversions of tradition as that of Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim. In the popular imagination he shares with Faust the odium of Satanic intimacy. His name is connected with the practice of Black

Magic in its gloomiest and most repellent forms. The tales which purport to describe his secret doings are not even painted in the colours of romance or surrounded with the glamour inalienable to the forbidden arts. Fantastic, and evidently the result of the grossest superstition, these stories represent Agrippa as having plumbed the depths of diabolism. The name of this great man, one of the most illustrious scholars and lofty thinkers of his time, a figure who towered above his contemporaries, is associated with exploits, which in their wild improbability recall those of the enchanters of mediæval romance. By his free and fearless denunciation of their gross ignorance he had offended the Churchmen of his day—not the more scholarly and more liberal-minded, many of whom remained his sincere friends to the last, but that narrow and ignorant section which set its face against all criticism or progressive thought, who regarded his learning as uncanny, his mystical gifts as the result of Satanic converse, and who were determined upon his destruction chiefly because he had so signally defeated them in public debate.

To this end the monks and friars whom he had worsted circulated the most ludicrous reports

concerning Agrippa's habits and magical exploits. They assured their congregations that he slept nightly in the moon, and that on completing a lecture at Fribourg he was able to commence one a moment later at Point-à-Mousson. The very dogs of which he was fond were construed as diabolical familiars, and one of them, it was said, haunted the sage's dying bed, ready to spring upon his soul as it quitted the body. Another legend actually refers to him as the favourite sorcerer of the Emperor Charles V, although it is well known that he never resided at the court of this prince, who, indeed, had taken mortal offence at his work on *The Vanity of the Arts and Sciences.* He is also rumoured to have shown Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, the likeness of his dead mistress, the daughter of Lord Kildare, in a magic mirror. A student who entered his apartment and had the temerity to open one of his magic books we are informed was speedily torn in pieces by demons. A widespread story tells us that when Agrippa tarried at an inn, the money he left in payment of his score was later found to have turned into bones or leaves. Such are the fictions that Thevet and Delrio have transmitted to us regarding this great mystic and adept, and,

had it not been for the testimony of his disciple Wierus, no other voice might have been raised in his own generation to shield his memory from the absurd aspersions which have been cast upon it by the unworthy spite of his enemies.

It was the mission of Agrippa to purify the science of magic, to raise it out of the slough of superstition into which it had fallen in mediæval times, to demonstrate that it was not in any way opposed to science, but the same in nature and essence. To Agrippa, magic is the apotheosis of science, the grand, the universal art. No more perspicuous mind ever addressed itself to the consideration of the sciences known as occult, accepting that which seemed worthy, lofty, reasonable, spiritual, rejecting that which was base, sordid, and absurd. Yet the intolerance of the lesser ecclesiastical orders of his day—men without a trace of spirituality or a vestige of true learning—rendered his life a nightmare of indigence and turmoil, pursuing him from town to town and country to country, closing all doors of worldly advancement to him, and at last hounding him to a miserable and lonely death in the house of a stranger.

CHAPTER II

THE YOUTHFUL MAGIAN

AGRIPPA was the son of noble parents, of the House of Von Nettesheim, and was born at Cologne—the city of Albertus Magnus—on November 14th, 1486. Cologne had been known in Roman times as Colonia Agripina, the camp of Marcus Agrippa, and it is not unlikely that the infant was named in allusion to this circumstance. His ancestors had been for generations in the service of the House of Austria, and he himself was destined for the same service. In all likelihood he was educated at the University of his native city, which probably accounts for his bias towards scholastic theology. He became versed in many European languages, and it is plain, from his early acquaintance with occult lore, that he must have had access to a large number of works treating of esoteric knowledge, probably in particular those of Albertus Magnus, his fellow-townsman, whose ideas seem to have

proved exceptionally congenial to him, and to have influenced in a great measure his own beliefs. Serving Maximilian, the Emperor of Germany, at first as a secretary, he undertook a diplomatic mission of some importance to the court of France, and engaged in a wild adventure in Catalonia on behalf of a Spanish client of his royal master, in which he narrowly escaped with his life.

In France he made many friends, and his correspondence at this period, whilst he was yet a mere youth of two and twenty, shows how powerfully his natural inclinations led him to the consideration of everything connected with the hidden sciences and the mysterious in general. The whole trend of the wisdom of that day was towards the esoteric knowledge of the Theosophists, Cabalists, and Neoplatonists. Secret societies were formed among young men of mystical inclinations, and the letters Agrippa wrote and received at this period of his life, show clearly that he was engaged with others in the formation of a brotherhood, the purpose of whose members was to encourage each other in the study of profound things. Already, by unwearied search among rare and curious volumes, he had collected notes for a complete treatise

upon magic, and we find such eminent scholars as Theodoric, Bishop of Cyrene, and Trithemius corresponding with the young magian, applauding his knowledge and expressing admiration for the shrewdness and justice of his conclusions.

Settling for a time at the little University town of Dôle in Burgundy, he rather fluttered the learned folk there resident by a series of lectures on Reuchlin's treatise on the Mirific Word, in which he reconciled Cabalism with Platonism and its offshoots. For this he received the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity from the University authorities. Not a word was at this time whispered of heresy or disaffection. But even in the hour of his youthful triumph, one Catilinet, a Franciscan friar, found in his lectures matter for the fiercest condemnation, and prepared a withering counterblast to them.

In the same year Agrippa espoused a lady of Geneva, whose name we do not know, and who has been confounded by several of his biographers with his second wife. Shortly after his marriage he seems to have addressed himself to his grand design, the writing of his *Occult Philosophy* in three books. The manuscript of this he sent to Trithemius, Abbot of

St. James at Wurzburg, one of the most learned and acute scholars and mystics of his time. In transmitting the work he summarized in a memorable letter his opinions regarding magical science. "I wondered much," he says, "and, indeed, felt indignant, that up to this time no one had arisen to vindicate so sublime and sacred a study from the accusation of impiety, for as much as those whom I have seen of the more recent writers, Roger Bacon, Robert of York, Peter of Abano, Albertus Magnus, Arnold of Villeneuve, Anselm of Parma, Picatrix of Spain, Cecco, Asculo, Florentinus, and many other writers of obscurer name, when they have promised to treat of Magic, have either supplied idle matter without any connecting system, or else have published superstitions not to be received by honest men. Thus my spirit was aroused within me, and through wonder and indignation I too conceived the desire to philosophise, thinking that I should produce a work not unworthy of praise—inasmuch as I have been from early years a curious and fearless explorer of wonderful effects and the full working of mysteries—if I could vindicate against the ill words of calumniators and restore that ancient Magic, studied by all the wise, purged and freed

from the errors of impiety, and adorned with its own reasonable system."

Trithemius's reply was of the most encouraging kind. He was impelled to admiration by the ability with which Agrippa had penetrated "such secret recesses of knowledge hidden from many even of the wisest men," but while exhorting him to continue his labours, he adds a word of wise counsel, such, indeed, as might well be addressed to all youthful and enthusiastic students of mysticism.

"Speak of things public to the public," he says, "but of things lofty and secret only to the loftiest and most private of your friends. Hay to an ox and sugar to a parrot. Rightly interpret this, lest you, as some others have been, be trampled down by oxen." Happy had Agrippa been had he followed this excellent advice. In the very hour in which he received it he was also notified of the enmity of the fierce Catilinet and the effect the friar's criticisms had had upon the literary society at Dôle, the scene of his recent triumph. But with Agrippa enthusiasm ever outrode caution. It appears to have been constitutionally impossible for him to remain silent under undeserved abuse. He was a natural fighter, and it never seems to have occurred to

him that he might suffer for the free expression of his opinions, might live to repent the hour in which he had ventured to place before oxen a pabulum unfitted and unnatural to them. Scorn is the reward of most mystics, but to court it openly, especially in such an environment as Agrippa found himself, is mere foolhardiness. To-day matters are more evenly balanced, and the mystic finds at least as many supporters as opponents. But what hope was there for the protagonist of secret things in the early years of the sixteenth century ?

Agrippa, however, had enough of caution not to seek a publisher for his marvellous book, the principles of which we shall now briefly examine.

CHAPTER III

"THE OCCULT PHILOSOPHY"

EVEN a passing acquaintance with the literature of mediæval mysticism shows how deeply it is beholden to the Neoplatonic school of Alexandria and its offshoot, the Byzantine school of Occult thought. The philosophy of Agrippa is in direct line with the tradition of Neoplatonism. As I have already said, he draws, too, very largely from his townsman Albertus Magnus, with whose works it seems to me he must have become especially familiar in his early years. The Jewish Cabala, on which many of his beliefs are founded, was itself greatly indebted to the Alexandrians, who, in turn, were undoubtedly as much inspired by the thought of ancient Egypt as by the philosophy of Plato and Pythagoras. The Cabalistic doctrine informs and influences every page of *The Occult Philosophy*. It is in such a philosophical line of descent that we find what is perhaps the best proof of the oft-

repeated assertion that the occult tradition was handed down through the ages from one school of adepts to another. Agrippa was indeed one of the sixteenth-century protagonists of a doctrine that probably had its inception in Egypt several thousands of years before the dawn of the Christian era.

This is indeed strongly borne in upon us by the argument of Agrippa's first book, in which he outlines the nature of the First Cause. There is, he tells us, a threefold world, elementary, celestial, and intellectual. These three components of the universe are separately examined in the three books in which he sets forth his esoteric ideas. "Wise men," he says, "disdain not to ascend by degrees through each world to the Author of All Worlds, and admire not only the more exalted things, but seek to draw down their virtues from above." The powers of the elementary world are to be unveiled by the study of physics and of the combinations of things natural. The celestial world is to be known by research into the mystery of numbers and the contemplation of astrology. This leads to a consideration of the intelligences working in the world and of the sacred mysteries.

Agrippa then applies himself to a definition

of Magical Science. There is no regular philosophy, he says, that is not natural, mathematical, or theological. The first instructs us regarding the nature of worldly things, the second treats of the quantity of bodies and their three dimensions and the motion of celestial bodies, while the last deals with the nature of God, of Mind, of Intelligence, of angels and devils, of the soul, and casts light upon religion and sacred rites and mysteries, the virtues of words and figures, the secret operations of mysteries and seals. Natural magic effects a junction between these three principal departments of philosophy. There is, indeed, no true magic apart from any one of them, and here Agrippa admits that his inspiration had its source in Egyptian, Neoplatonic, Judean, and Chaldean mystical thought.

The young magian then discusses the nature of the four elements, and treats of the four kinds of perfect compounds generated by them—stones, metals, plants, and animals. Each element contains in a measure the properties of all. Thus plants have a certain affinity with air, and fire is not less natural to animals. This is, of course, an illustration of the Platonic ideas that all things exist in

all. But above and beyond this, everything has its especial occult virtue, which is a sequel of its species and form. The causes of these occult qualities transcend the reach of human intellect, and the magician can attain to knowledge of them through experience alone. To this class belong those marvels which are past ordinary comprehension. Nothing, however, is incredible by reason of its being marvellous. Man regards the marvellous as incredible only when it opposes itself to known universal law.

In all this we see, of course, that Agrippa was thoroughly imbued with the Platonic notion of superior ideas, of which Paracelsus and later Swedenborg were the chief modern apologists. Everything in the mundane world has its celestial counterpart, receiving operative power through the assistance of the World Soul. Anciently expressed in the *Timæus* of Plato and the works of Apuleius and Hermes Trismegistus, this conception lies at the very roots of magic. Indeed, it is still to be observed in a crude and possibly pristine form in the beliefs of certain barbarian races, in the *Mana* of the Malays and the *Orenda* of the North-American Indians. A great reservoir of soul-force exists, a quint-

essence of divine and supernatural power, which does not partake of the nature of the four elements, but is a fifth essence, a primary quality above, yet beside them. This force or spirit exists in the body of the world, as the human spirit in the body of man. It interpenetrates everything material, abounding in the celestial bodies and descending in the rays of the stars, so that matter which absorbs their emanations, partakes for the time being of their influence. Occult properties are conveyed into herbs, stones, metals, and animals through the sun, moon, planets and stars. If, then, it is possible to separate spirit from matter, or make use of only those things in which spirit predominates, results of great advantage may be obtained. It was in virtue of this theory that the alchemists attempted to separate this force, world-spirit, or celestial influence from gold into the baser metals, so that they might partake of the nature of gold. Agrippa states that he has himself succeeded in doing this, but that he could never produce more gold in this manner "than the weight of that was out of which we extracted the spirit." Out of an ounce of gold, then, he could make an ounce of gold, but no more.

Divine and celestial influences, says Agrippa,

do not emanate directly from Providence. The seal of the ideas contained in them is allocated to governing intelligences, or angels. The manner of discovering the occult virtues of things is only to be gained through experience and conjecture, or, as we moderns might say, by experiment and research. It may generally be taken, however, that like draws to like, fire to fire, water to water. Thus, if we seek to obtain any especial property or virtue, we must cast about for the material, animal, vegetable, or mineral in which it is most largely contained. For example, we will find boldness in the heart of a lion or a cock, part of a frog will make one talkative, and snakes and vipers conduce to long life. Between things that are different, too, there are sympathies and antipathies, and this applies also to the celestial bodies, where certain planets have affinities with one another, whilst others abhor each other.

CHAPTER IV

ASTROLOGY AND THE MYSTERY OF NUMBERS

This brings us to Agrippa's early attitude on astrology, which is set forth in the first book of his *Occult Philosophy*, from the twenty-second to the thirty-fifth chapters inclusive. In this place he is in substantial agreement with the astrological science of his time. But it is plain, almost from the first, that Agrippa, although he seems to have given the deepest consideration to the principles of the science, never had the same leanings towards it as he did to magic proper. Indeed, later in life, he sneered openly when Margaret of Navarre requested him to cast a horoscope regarding the issue of events then pending. He speaks harshly of "astrological superstitions," and grumbles that his talent should be condemned to what he calls "such unworthy craft." The Bishop of Cyrene complains in a letter that when he spoke with him, his statements on astrology were vague. In his treatise on *The Vanity of Arts and Sciences*, too, Agrippa quotes certain of the old Greek philosophers who condemned astrological belief, and says that

he deems it impossible for a man to make prognostications unless by inward inspiration or through communication with the powers of evil. Astrological prediction, he is assured, depends upon obscure chance. Thus we are puzzled when we find in the forty-first chapter of the same book that astrology is indissolubly linked to magic, and that "who ever possesses magic without astrology has nothing, but is altogether out of the way."

This seems to me good proof that Agrippa's outlook was experimental in character. His was one of those minds which are constantly accepting, constantly rejecting, a very furnace of thought, in which change and transmutation are constantly proceeding. Although this makes for instability of superficial belief, of the thought of the moment, it does not alter basic belief—deep-rooted conviction, native or acquired. Everything points to the conclusion that Agrippa was a man hasty and splenetic, who, when smarting under a reverse of fortune, exclaimed against any and everything. The book, too, in which he casts slights upon astrological science, is frankly satirical, the work of a disappointed man, who condemns in diatribe and invective the entire corpus of human knowledge. But

it is noticeable that although in its pages he spares none of the departments of human effort, he is yet exceedingly careful not to throw any dubiety upon the operations of magic, however much he condemns its diabolical side, and as his magical beliefs were rooted in the doctrine of emanations, it was scarcely possible for him to deny the fact of astrological influences, however he may have carped at the ability of men to draw wise conclusions therefrom.

It is impossible in such a sketch as this to speak minutely of the doctrines set forth in this first and greatest work of Agrippa. He describes how vital and angelical gifts may be drawn from above, the use of suffumigations or perfumes and the different planets with which they are connected, the wearing of charms and rings, physiognomy, divination in all its forms, and the nature and power of the human mind and passions.

The second book of *The Occult Philosophy* deals with the mysteries and powers of numbers. If there are so many occult virtues in natural things, he says, what marvel if in numbers, which are pure and co-mixed only with ideas in the divine mind, there should be found virtues greater and more occult? The mystery of number resides in its abstract power, in

its rational and formal state, not in the mere expression of it by the voice. He then proceeds to detail the hidden virtues of numbers, and in doing so reveals the nature of magical gesture. Certain gestures used by the magicians, he says, which the profane think absurd, are meant to express numbers by bodily notation. Thus one is expressed by bending the little finger of the left hand over the palm; a thousand by placing the left hand on the breast, the fingers pointing toward heaven; sixty thousand by holding the left thigh with the left hand, fingers downward. The magical signs for numbers are also treated of. Thus a cross represents ten, a circle a hundred, and so forth. This part of the book is also notable as depicting a peculiar system of ciphering taken from two very ancient astrological treatises.

The significance of numbers, Agrippa contends, may be discerned in names and in connection with gods, planets, and elements. Each of the seven planets has a sacred table representing the divine order of numbers impressed upon it by the superior Idea acting through the soul of the world. These tables, with the seals of the various planets and their rulers, are duly given, along with their occult virtues.

From secret arithmetic Agrippa turns to

occult geometry, which besides containing the mystery of numbers, holds also that of form. The circle, answering, as it does, to unity and ten, and being infinite, is judged to be most fit for binding in conjurations. The pentacle has also great command over evil spirits, through the innate power of the number five and the mystery of its double set of angles. But the power of these signs is not in the things themselves, but in the reflection from higher powers which they attract by correspondency and harmony.

The mighty power which resides in sound and harmony did not escape the observation of Agrippa. After touching on the "music of the spheres," the mechanism of the voice, and on acoustics generally, the harmonies correspondent with each star are dwelt upon. This part of the book enters most minutely into the correspondence of musical laws with the harmonies of nature, explains the belief that a harmonious set of musical intervals denote the distances between the planets, and discovers also a musical correspondence in the relations of the elements to one another. Soul-harmony is described, as is that of the human frame. Stress, too, is laid on the fact that no magical work is to be undertaken without observation of the harmonies of the celestial bodies.

CHAPTER V

STORM AND STRESS

THE third and last book of the *Occult Philosophy* treats of the secrets of religion and spirit, which, says the master, have a profound effect on magical operations. He deals with the question of the godhead—a vexed one in his day—with Orphic and Cabalistic analogies, divine names and their influence, of intelligences, angels and devils, sacred characters and figures, and the evocation of spirits. The fiftieth chapter in this work—a long one—deals with the state of man after death, and is practically a summary of the beliefs of all former ages on the subject. When the body dies, the spirit returns to God. This spirit is the mind, pure intelligence, as apart from the soul, and incapable of sin. If the Soul has lived justly, it accompanies the Mind to the celestial sphere, and Soul and Mind work together the will of God. But souls that have done evil, parted after death from the mind,

wander and stray without intelligence, clothing themselves with matter, materializing themselves, so to speak, because of the strong affinity they possess with everything terrestrial. Any more drastic punishment in the after-life the sage does not consider probable. The sorest affliction to the base soul is its own baseness.

In a later part of the work, Agrippa treats of the higher stages of mysticism, of the discipline of the body and the soul, and of the sacred rites appointed for the strengthening of virtue. To outline this discipline is, indeed, the remaining purpose of the book. Man is the temple of the Deity. He can attain to union with the Divine only by slow progress along the path of purity, subduing the powers of the flesh, contemplating constantly the Divine Perfection, making unceasing efforts to approach it. Such a course necessitates much abstention from human society. Nor should the mystic neglect extrinsic aids to holiness, as the ministries of the Church, benediction, the emblems of sanctity. The last chapters of the work are concerned with rites, forms, incense, their uses and purposes. To the pure alone, he says finally, is it given to penetrate " the arcana hidden among many riddles."

Although the three volumes of *The Occult Philosophy* were not published in their entirety until after his death, the reputation which they gave him, as well as the fact that he was a known Hebrew scholar, was quite sufficient to brand Agrippa as a sorcerer and worker of evil mysteries in the eyes of the more ignorant of the priesthood. They made it impossible for him to attach himself to the court of Margaret of Austria, as he had hoped to do, so returning once more to the service of the Emperor, he was dispatched to London on an embassy to the court of Henry VIII. Whilst there, he lodged with John Colet, Dean of St. Paul's, in his house at Stepney. Colet was a man of intense spirituality, and during his visit he directed Agrippa's attention especially to the Epistles of Paul.

Returning to Germany, Agrippa, now twenty-five years of age, was sent to take part in the Emperor's war in Italy in the capacity of a soldier. He lectured on Plato in the Universities of the conquered Italian cities, but at the Battle of Pavia was taken prisoner by the Swiss. In the heat of the combat, the manuscripts of his various works, contained, probably, in a hanging pocket, were scattered on the field of battle, and he succeeded in

recovering only a portion of them. He was soon released, and with his freedom commenced that long and distressing series of attempts to attach himself to the service of some prince or noble of exalted rank. His first and perhaps his only generous patron was the Marquis of Montferrat, who extended assistance at a time of real difficulty. At Pavia Agrippa expounded the *Pimander* of Hermes Trismegistus before the University, and was admitted by its Senate to the doctorates both of Law and Medicine.

After many years of campaigning, in which his first wife accompanied him from town to town in Northern Italy, Agrippa was appointed in 1518, at the age of thirty-two, advocate and orator to the free town of Metz, where he laboured as a physician, fighting the plague. During his occupancy of this office he seems to have made a host of enemies by his fearless condemnation of ignorance and religious superstition. A poor peasant woman was about to be burnt for witchcraft by the local inquisitor, but through his advocacy of her cause Agrippa succeeded in obtaining her discharge. This, no less than the mordant and sarcastic humour which he exercised upon the " brotherkins " of the district, as he called

the friars, so incensed them, that at last he was compelled to leave Metz for his native city of Cologne. There his wife died of the plague, and, feeling his surroundings no longer congenial, he betook himself to Geneva. While in Switzerland he made great efforts to obtain the patronage of the Duke of Savoy, but, doubtless, his stormy record was against him, and the only employment he could obtain was that of physician and counsellor to the small Swiss town of Fribourg, where he was generously treated. While in Geneva he had married Loyse Tyssie, a girl of nineteen. Had he remained in Fribourg, he would have been wise. Several of his neighbours had alchemical "leanings," and he assisted them in making projections. But he yearned after a wider sphere of activity, and this was his undoing.

CHAPTER VI

AGRIPPA'S CHARACTER

THE personal appearance of Agrippa is known only from the rather rough woodcut on the title-page of the first complete edition of his *Occult Philosophy*. It shows a North German type of face, clean-shaven, with large, well-developed features, a thoughtful expression, a broad, but not lofty forehead, a heavy mouth, and a powerful and well-developed lower jaw and chin—the chin of a fighter. It is nevertheless the face of a dreamer, a man absorbed and contemplative. Such men, as a rule, if awakened from lofty reverie by the petty irritations of mundane things, are apt to express their impatience in a surly and even savage manner, and there is proof that in debate and in the heat of condemnation of such ideas as he considered unworthy or tyrannical, Agrippa indulged in invective which as a philosopher ill became him. He

did not even disdain to hold argument with local nonentities whose opinions upon matters of great spiritual importance it would have been better to ignore.

It seemed impossible for him to keep away from controversy, and as the possessor of a sarcastic tongue usually succeeds in the gentle art of making enemies, so Agrippa seems to have been continually surrounded by the annoyances which accompany altercation in a restricted sphere. Impatience with ignorance, quite as much as lack of mere material success, was probably the cause of the biting sarcasm which seems to have won him so many enemies wherever he went. But this is not to say that he was friendless. Indeed his own especial circle of intimates appear to have regarded him with something approaching reverence. Their letters are addressed to him in terms of the utmost affection and respect, and that distant scholars revered and valued him there is abundant proof. "Illustrious Agrippa," "Most loved Agrippa," are phrases commonly encountered in his correspondence. That he grappled his friends to his soul "with hooks of steel" is proved by the circumstance that he retained all the friendships of his youth up to the time of his death, and that there is

no record of his ever having quarrelled with any of his close associates.

In his own domestic circle, too, as husband and father, Agrippa seems to have comported himself with gentleness and affection. He was fortunate in the two first marriages he made, both of the ladies to whom he was joined proving excellent helpmates and loyal companions. The first, whose name we do not know, seems to have been a woman of rare gifts of mind and character, modest and prudent, while the second, Jeanne Loyse Tyssie, whom he espoused in 1521, rendered him faithful and loving aid in his many difficulties. By his first wife he had one son whose name and fate are not recorded, and by the second, six children, Haymon, a daughter who died in infancy, Henry, John, and two others whose names are not known. Henry and John applied for letters to establish their legitimacy in 1560. The correspondence of Agrippa's secretary whilst his master was away from home reveals the intimate and affectionate intercourse between the master and all the members of his family. His essays on the *Pre-eminence of Woman and the Sanctity of Marriage* are eloquent of the veneration in which he held the female sex in general.

In 1524, tempted by dazzling offers, and refusing invitations from the Duke of Bourbon, Agrippa accepted office in France as physician to the Queen-Mother, Louisa of Savoy. During the two and a half years he was in her service he received no salary, and was compelled to exist along with his family in a condition of semi-starvation, eking out a miserable livelihood by loans and the occasional practice of medicine. Much has been made of the official ill-treatment meted out to Agrippa. He seems, however, to have hankered after preferment, and had he definitely abandoned this quest and applied himself to " building up a practice," there is no doubt that his life would have been much more tolerable. But he seems to have been of those who consider that " the State " should support men of ability, and to have been obsessed by this not very independent idea. He was essentially not the " dreamer as the man of action." But after long periods in the laboratory or the library he seems to have felt the necessity for stimulus of some kind, and this invariably took the shape of violent controversy rather than constructive labour of any sort, although he seems to have had a bias towards invention. He possessed a remarkable faculty for dis-

covering the joints in an opponent's armour, of finding his weak spot, and probing it past endurance. He had builded for himself a wonderful habitation in the realms of thought, a spiritual watch-tower, whence, on occasion, he issued armed *cap-à-pie* to do battle with such adversaries as chance brought him. Than the first labour there is, perhaps, none better fitting a man. All men should strive to build a refuge for the soul, a hermitage, where, as the years pass by, they may lay up treasure of beauty and right thought, and to which they may betake themselves for solace and self-examination. The second is miserable. Dispute breeds hate, and, continued in, will warp the finest character. There is no vanity like that which lies in the belief in superior prowess, in mental invulnerability. This, then, was Agrippa's weakness—disdain, a fierce contempt for the opinions of others. But rarely in his letters do we find him saying praiseworthy things, kind things, of his contemporaries. Even his best friends deprecated this tendency. "They approve not of the man's violence," says Erasmus, "and ascribe to him more care in collection than judgment in selection."

Grave, eternally rapt in contemplation of

the grand mysteries of life and death, magic and science, impatient of the arguments of lesser men, an awful dignity must have clothed this strange man as with a mystic garment. A man not to be lightly approached, yet kind and even humorous with his intimates—a lion in the path to such as were his adversaries.

SYMBOLICAL ILLUSTRATION
Representing the
Fertility of the Earth.

CHAPTER VII

IN THE DEPTHS

AGGRAVATED and disappointed by his two and a half years' struggle to wring his salary from the dilatory and deceitful officials of the French court, Agrippa, at the age of forty-one, turned his back on Lyons. After a vain effort to procure other employment, he was at last overjoyed to receive a letter from a friend at Antwerp, one Father Aurelius of Aquapendente, whom he had known in Italy, inviting him to settle in that city, and assuring him that he would find many kindred spirits there. This Italian monk and a certain prosperous countryman of his, Augustine Furnario, seem to have been engaged in occult pursuits, and we find Agrippa in his correspondence with the Churchman throwing new light upon several passages in his *Occult Philosophy*. This work was now widely circulated in manuscript, but the important third book, containing the very

essence of Agrippa's mysticism, was, as a rule, only summarized in these MSS., so that the aspirants at Antwerp had gleaned merely the general purport of its contents, and, desiring more light, questioned the author closely upon its details.

In a letter to Father Aurelius, Agrippa informs him that his philosophy consists in a study of God through His works, and that the key to *The Occult Philosophy* was Intelligence, for the comprehension of exalted things gives power to man when he is raised by it to closer communion with God, and dying to the flesh has his life hidden in Christ. So it was, he says, with the Apostle John. That doctrine of Aspiration which had been the magian's guide in youth remained with him in his maturity. "But," he says, "I warn you not to be deceived herein concerning me, or think that I myself have attained any divine heights. I have been baptized a soldier in human blood, have almost always been attached to courts, am now bound by a tie of the flesh to a most dear wife, am exposed, an unstable man, to all the blasts of fortune, am wholly turned aside by the world, the flesh, and household cares, and have not sought after those heavenly gifts. But I wish to be accepted as a guide

who, himself standing at all times outside the gates, shows other men where they should enter."

Travelling to Antwerp with his household goods, his models, and inventions, which appear to have been numerous, and his family of nine persons, he was delayed at Paris for no less than six months through the Duc de Vendôme's refusal of his passports. Nor could he obtain his salary from the court officials, who, he grumbles, could still afford the cost of bringing a magician from Germany. He writes severely at this time against the misuse of the most holy art of magic. "I do not deny," he says, "that there are arts, wise thoughts, by which, without offence to God, injury to faith or religion, kingdoms may be defended, counsel tested, wealth increased, enemies overcome, the goodwill of mankind conciliated, sicknesses combated, health preserved, life prolonged, the vigour of youth restored. . . . But if there is beyond this any art of prescience, or of working miracles, certainly to these triflers and slaves of the demons it remains unknown." Agrippa was discarded by the French court, not because he was a magician, but because he was too faithful to the principles of the higher magic

to descend to the follies which seem to have been expected of him by courtiers and their kind. Arrived at length at Antwerp, he was appointed by the Regent Margaret Historiographer and Judiciary Councillor to the Emperor Charles V. He obtained licence to print his works, and soon attained a high degree of local favour. Pupils sought his instruction. One of them, John Wier, or Wierus, afterwards the author of the celebrated *De Præstigiis Dæmonum*, lived in Agrippa's house, and at a later day upheld his reputation, shattering the absurd stories afterwards current regarding his feats of black magic.

While Agrippa was absent from home attending a wealthy patient at Mechlin, his secretary wrote acquainting him with the evil news that his wife had fallen sick. He hastened home. She had been stricken by the plague then raging, and died in her husband's arms. Several others of his household perished, and in the hour of his terrible misfortune the wretched man was mocked by prospects of the highest advancement. Henry VIII of England invited him to London, offering him great things, and the Emperor's chancellor wrote him holding out brilliant promises. The Marquis of Montferrat and

others also entreated him to enter their service. "Which I shall choose," Agrippa said, "I know not. I would rather live free than go into service. It becomes me, however, to consult not my own pleasure, but the well-being of my children."

He did not, however, quit Antwerp, but remained there as historiographer. Once more he was disappointed in the matter of salary. In 1530, at the age of forty-four, he wrote his celebrated treatise *On the Vanity of Arts and Sciences*, which contained enough truth about courts to offend the Emperor, and enough truth about ecclesiastical corruption to offend the monks. A few months later he published one book of his *Occult Philosophy*, and thus supplied both monks and courtiers with an easy means of traducing him as a "magician." At this time he was invited to write in defence of Queen Catherine of England whom Henry VIII wished to divorce. But the project fell through, and dunned by creditors and usurers, the unfortunate scholar was at length seized at Brussels and thrown into prison for debt. Out of the depths he appealed for justice, not for mercy, pointing out that had his services been paid for, this indignity could not have been put upon him.

Influential friends succeeded in bringing about an almost immediate hearing of the case. Before his judges Agrippa appeared with a bold front. He was, indeed, the accuser. "I have Cæsar for my debtor," he exclaimed, in a speech of notable eloquence, the dignity of which was, however, somewhat marred by its scathing sarcasm. "Wherefore do you let your eyes blink at his avarice, he who allows his pensioners to go ragged for their pay and be vexed with the terrors of a gaol. What equity is this of yours—what justice? Accept the Emperor as my bail." This unparalleled boldness had probably ended in speedy disaster had not Cardinal Campeggio and the Bishop of Liège prevailed in intercession. Unwise, perhaps, in the worldly sense, wise to admiration as a fearless appeal to pure justice. For it is an evil thing that the great ones of the earth should have the power to lay affront upon the Sons of Light.

CHAPTER VIII

THE VANITY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

If the publication of a volume of his *Occult Philosophy* in 1531 aroused the enmity of the theologians, or that section of them which had resolved upon his ruin, the appearance of Agrippa's *Vanity of Arts and Sciences* in the following year certainly did not allay the ecclesiastical animus against him. In the dedication he himself admits the cynical spirit of the book, and its tendency must indeed be perfectly clear to those who can appreciate the circumstances of Agrippa's life, its many disappointments and distresses. It was a direct blow at the narrowness and bigotry of those schoolmen who desired to test all contemporary knowledge by the standard to be found in the writings of the ancients. If a thesis or an idea could not find sufficient corroboration or excuse in the writings of classic authors, it was regarded by these illiberal critics as unworthy of statement. From

censure of this kind there was no escape. Agrippa was cognizant of the undiscovered world which lay outside of the narrow confines of scholastic reasoning. "I write this," he says, "because I see men puffed up with human knowledge, contemning the study of the scriptures and giving more heed to the maxims of philosophers than to the laws of God . . . . a most detestable custom has invaded all or most schools of learning, to swear their disciples never to contradict Aristotle, Boëthius, Thomas Aquinas, or whoever else may be their scholastic god, from whom if there be any that differ so much as a nail's breadth, him they proclaim a scandalous heretic, a criminal against the holy sciences, fit only to be consumed in fire and flames. How impious a piece of tyranny it is to make captive the wits of students to fixed authors, and to deprive disciples of the liberty of searching after and following the truth!"

The sciences, he continues, "bring us no divine advantage beyond that which was promised of old by the Serpent, when he said, 'Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.' Arts and sciences in the hands of good men may become useful to the commonwealth even if they make their possessors none the

happier, but in the hands of fools they are dangerous. After all, they are but the opinions and decrees of private men, full of error and uncertainty. True happiness consists not in understanding, but in living understandingly." In chapters devoted to each of the arts he surveys literature, poetry, history, rhetoric with a wealth of illustration that shows his vast erudition, pointing out the weaknesses inherent in these arts with a sure and deliberate hand. When he approaches the occult arts he denounces astrology and divination, but when he deals with magic it is very noticeable that his whole tone undergoes a change. He divides it into two parts, natural and ceremonial. The first, he says, is nothing else but the chief power of all the sciences, the perfection of philosophy, which by the assistance of natural force and faculty through their mutual and opportune application performs those things that are above human reason. He reviews the ancient history of magic. "Magicians," he says, "are the most accurate inquirers into nature, and frequently produce effects before the time ordained by nature. There is really nothing miraculous in producing roses and ripe figs in March or in causing thunder or rain, transmutations or

transfigurations." He denounces the superstition with which many writers on magic have imbued their works. He passes on to ceremonial or mathematical magic, which brings about results by the help of celestial influences. But it merely produces contrivances partaking of neither truth nor divinity, but imitative only of conjuring and necromancy, which are to be abhorred as detestable arts. He teaches that "unless there was something of reality in them, and that many mischievous and wicked things were accomplished thereby, both divine and human laws had not so strictly provided for the punishment thereof." Theurgy or divine magic is the search for communion with good angels by the purification of the soul. Rightly understood they are not evil, but in the hands of the foolish they are pernicious and make for superstition.

In this book Agrippa returned once more to the subject of the Cabala, but scarcely in the same spirit as when he first treated of it. "I do not doubt," he says, "but that God revealed many things to Moses and the prophets which were contained under covert of the words of the Law and not to be communicated to the vulgar. So I own that this art of which

the Jews boast their possession, and which I at one time investigated with great labour and pains, is a mere rhapsody of superstition, allied to theurgic magic. . . . The Jews, although most skilful in divine names, after the coming of Christ, were unable to do what had been done by their forefathers. The Cabala of the Jews is now, therefore, only a vain delusion." This passage, perhaps more than any other, shows how far Agrippa had proceeded on the way of the Christian mystic. The transmutation of the spirit through the alchemy of divine love now appears to him the only true and permissible work, destructive of all more ancient systems.

In the next chapter of his *Arts and Sciences*, he turns once again to magic. "It is true," he says, "that, being young, I wrote three books of magic myself in a considerable volume which I entitled *Occult Philosophy*, in which such errors as I then committed through the curiosity of youth, now grown most wary, I do publicly recant, for I vainly wasted much of my time and means upon these vanities. This advantage I got that I know now by what arguments to exhort others against following the same way to ruin."

This passage, of course, is not condemnatory

of the life mystical, but of the forms, rites, and vain observances which cling to its early history. These Agrippa has now entirely shaken off as unnecessary to the adept, who, as he advances, recognizes their vanity, and who knows full well that mysticism, like religion, has its crude beginnings, through which not only races but individuals must pass before they come to knowledge of the true way.

CHAPTER IX

MYSTICISM AND THE REFORMATION

THE storm that the *Vanity of Arts and Sciences* aroused did not pass unnoticed by the Emperor, who demanded that Agrippa should make public recantation of his opinions, especially such of them as challenged the generally accepted religious beliefs of his time. He had made scathing allusions to the priesthood, to their pomp and ritualistic extravagance, and to the use of images. Now he boldly refused to deny one word of what he had written. Indeed, he added fuel to the fire by the publication of an apology for his work, addressed to the Imperial Parliament of Mechlin, in which he indignantly denied that he had said anything in contradiction to the teaching of the Catholic Church. The monks declared Agrippa to be a rank heretic. They objected to his statement that authority came from God alone, and was not delegated

by Him to angels or men. He owned that he was a man of free speech, but professed himself a Catholic. He twitted the monks upon their defeat in argument by Reuchlin, Erasmus, and other reformers, and told them that their days were numbered and that they should soon perish. It was their dark ignorance, he exclaimed, that roused the spark of what he calls "the Lutheran evil." In his book he had alluded to Luther as "the unconquered heretic." This phrase was especially denounced, but Agrippa replied that the ecclesiastics must perforce admit that Luther was both a heretic and unconquered in argument.

If they are to conquer Luther, he tells them, they must do so by arguments drawn from the word of God, not from fire and sword. He followed up this very militant "apology" by a complaint against the calumny of the monks and schoolmen. "I am denounced," he says, "as a heretic and a magician. As for my magic, I confess that I have done wonderful things, but none that offend God or hurt religion. . . . Many things are done by the powers of nature which ignorance or malice will attribute to the demons rather than to nature or to God."

This apology ended Agrippa's literary life.

Needless to say, after his fulminations against the Churchmen, his official salary was not forthcoming, and this although he was working hard at his task of historiographer, planning histories of the French War and the Turkish Expedition. He betook himself to Bonn with his children, and wrote to Erasmus that he was closely beset by the legions of the Sophists. Erasmus had gravely warned him against the folly of warring with the theologians. "They are not to be overcome," he wrote, "even if one had a better cause than St. Paul himself." "You may laugh," replied Agrippa, "I, in the meantime, will overcome, or die." There is very little doubt that, with all his lofty mysticism, Agrippa was informed by that spirit of dour obstinacy and combativeness which is to be seen in the characters of Luther and Knox, and which is usually allied to a personality by no means particularly likeable.

To those who are familiar with the literature of mysticism and reform in the sixteenth century, it must be very clear that the Reformation was hastened if not brought about by the many mystical societies which arose at this period. The broadsides of the Rosicrucians and similar publications are unquestionably anti-Papal in spirit. Was the

Reformation a great spiritual awakening, a revolt against the pomps and superstitions of an overgrown ecclesiasticism, or was it a concerted movement of learned mystics against the ecclesiastical persecution which condemned their labours ? In all probability it was both. It would seem that the mystics and magians, smarting under the denunciations of the Church, employed the Reformation as a means of striking back at their persecutors as well as of purifying religion generally, just as mystical societies seem to have assisted the earlier stages of the French Revolution, thus subserving the purposes of spiritual as well as political freedom. In all great world-movements, indeed, the hand of the mystic is to be seen, guiding, marshalling, shaping, and the renaissance of interest in everything occult during the present world-crisis is certainly no mere thing of chance.

CHAPTER X

AGRIPPA AS ALCHEMIST

It is in his *Vanity of Arts and Sciences* that we find Agrippa's most clear and extended statement regarding alchemy. In *The Occult Philosophy* he made frequent reference to alchemical projections and experiments which he himself had undertaken, but in the later volume we have evidence that he had rightly come to regard the Great Work as a spiritual rather than a material quest. "Alchymy or chymistry," he says, "is an art, if it may not be rather called a fucus or persecution of nature. Imposture's whole vanity easily betrays itself in this that it promises what nature can neither suffer nor perform." This is tantamount to denying the truth of his own early operations. It may be that Agrippa, like many other mystics, having rashly revealed certain secret things in his *Occult Philosophy*, thought it well in his later writings to throw the profane

off the track. But, if so, it is strange that only a year before the appearance of his *Vanity of Arts and Sciences*, a volume of his *Occult Philosophy* should have been published for the first time, and that while he penned his cynical treatise, he should be living in part upon the proceeds of the publication of his great mystical work. It adds to our confusion, too, to discover that all along he had been engaged in the alchemical operations at which he professed to smile.

"Many things," he says, "could I say of this art, *of which I am no great enemy*, were I not sworn to silence, a custom imposed upon persons newly initiated therein. . . . It would be too long to relate all the foolish mysteries of this art and empty riddles of the Green Lion, the Fugitive Hart, the Volant Eagle, the Dancing Fool, the Dragon devouring his tail, the Swelled Toad, the Crow's Head, of that which is blacker than black, of Mercury's Seal, of the Dirt of Foolishness and a thousand other trifles. Lastly of that one thing besides which there is nothing else, though as common as may be—the blessed subject of the most holy Philosopher's Stone, not to be spoken of without incurring perjury."

The master says, however, that he will

relate something of it, although obscurely and in such a manner that none but the sons of art will understand him. It is not too fiery, nor altogether earthy, nor has it the qualities of wateriness, sharpness, or obtuseness. It is light and soft, or at least not hard, sweet in taste and smell, grateful to the sight, pleasant to the ear, and delightful to think on. After saying that, in his opinion, the art of alchemy is worthy of all honour, he concludes with a diatribe against chemists in general, thus evidently drawing a distinction between the manual and spiritual departments of the art.

It is, perhaps, not strange that certain of his biographers have regarded Agrippa as a man who in early life was led away by the fantasies of his own imagination, and who in his later years, through stress of poverty and implacable reality, cynically retreated from his earlier position. I consider such an estimate of him erroneous. Poverty and hardship, instead of dissipating or destroying the imaginative faculty, usually greatly enhance it by throwing their victim back upon his own mental resources, by forcing him to take shelter in a world of his own from the world which has ill-treated him. The theory, too, which regards Agrippa as a mere vulgar

adventurer is simply based on ignorance of the man's true character and of the exalted position which he held in the eyes of his greatest contemporaries until the day of his death. No doubt, however, he had his moments of weakness and despair, when, hounded by his implacable enemies, he asked himself that question which all men engaged in any great work inevitably come to put to themselves sooner or later : " Is this thing worth while ? " That Agrippa, like most strong spirits, did consider it worth while, is amply proven by the fact that he seems never for a day to have ceased the practice of the higher mysteries of those arts against the more material aspects of which he had set his face. That he ever departed from the practice of magic is grotesquely untrue. But that in the course of his psychic development he came to discard the false magic for the true, the quest for material gold for that of the spirit, is abundantly proved.

CHAPTER XI

LAST DAYS

THE closing years of Agrippa's life seem to have been made more wretched and anxious by an unfortunate third marriage which he contracted. The woman he espoused, of whose very name we are ignorant, betrayed him and he divorced her. Shortly after this he was banished from Germany, probably by the direct agency of the Emperor, who had been roused to fury by Agrippa's scathing remarks upon the kingly office in his *Vanity of Arts and Sciences*. The hunted mystic seems to have made up his mind to journey to Lyons in the hope of publishing certain of his works in that city, but all accounts of his last days are extremely obscure. The best authenticated of these states that he betook himself to Grenoble, where he died. On his way to Lyons he was seized by order of Francis, the French king, and thrown into

prison for the publication of certain correspondence that discredited the Queen-mother. Set free by the influence of friends at court, he was still penniless and homeless. Wier, perhaps his most reputable biographer, states that he died at Grenoble in 1535. It seems that at the end he was kindly sheltered, not in a public hospital, as stated in the malicious reports of his enemies, but in the house of François de Vachon, President of the Parliament of Dauphiné, and that he was buried in the Church of the Preaching Friars at Grenoble. It seems clear, too, that he died in full communion with the Catholic Church. His tomb, says Allard, was destroyed during a Protestant outbreak in 1562. Chorier, who believes him to have died in the house of the Jurisconsult Guy Pape at Grenoble, states that an epitaph engraved on a large metal plate covered the tomb of the master.

From a careful study of the evidence, I am convinced that it is impossible to fix the precise date of the death of Agrippa, which is variously estimated as having taken place in 1534, 1535, and 1538. The second date appears to me to be the most reliable, as it is that given by Wier, who was, however, at that time resident in Paris. Strange, is it not, that so much

dubiety should hang around the most important dates in the lives of the great mystics? In such a circumstance does not the whole mystery of Agrippa's career have fitting conclusion? Mystery surrounds him at the end as it surrounded him throughout his career, and it seems symbolic of the man that he should have left scarcely a trace of his exit from a world which had entreated him so ill.

MANO CORNUTA

Italian charm to avert the "evil eye."

CHAPTER XII

WHAT MAGIC OWES TO AGRIPPA

To the lover of things occult the very name of Agrippa seems to attract to itself all the shadowed brilliance of magic, its irresistible appeal to the human heart, its rich and secret invocation to the spirit of man. Whatever the conflict of opinion regarding the true character of this extraordinary man, whatever discrepancies we encounter in his works, if we peruse them with fidelity we cannot but conclude that he was from his birth destined to the life mystical, whether, as in his earlier years, as a neophyte in the courts of the temple where reality is often attributed to things which are merely symbolic, or as an adept, when the true spiritual meaning of the great work dawns at last upon the aspirant and, illumined, he casts behind him all rites of vain observance. From first to last he was the faithful searcher after hidden truth, his

attitude towards the grand quest changing only as light was vouchsafed him.

From the first, as we have seen, he was less subservient to the dark superstitions which in his day clung to the study of Magic (I use the expression in preference to "Mysticism," as being the more time-honoured, and the better suited to the case of Agrippa) than any of his predecessors. His clear vision ruthlessly differentiated between the symbol and the truth it shadowed forth, the ritual act and that of which it was but the material concomitant. Few of the sons of mystery have been so "rich in saving common sense." He had also the saving grace of a subtle humour. But never in his most despairing moments did he cover with obloquy the Great Art at which he did not cease to toil. Rather did he condemn its crude professors, those who trafficked for gain in its baser offices. The fact that he identifies Magic with Religion is eloquent of his undeviating loyalty, the justness of his vision.

Agrippa's identification of Magic with Religion forced him to condemn those who degraded the Church every whit as fiercely as he had railed at those who degraded the sister office. He fell beneath a myriad

wounds. Yet, to those who can read his message aright, his ultimate triumph is abundantly manifest. To all men the precise nature of the work he accomplished may not be equally clear. It is, indeed, difficult to estimate it at its true importance. But in the time to come, when the world at last accepts a higher standard of spiritual aspiration, the lasting value of the work of Cornelius Agrippa will be universally recognized. As the soldier looks back upon Bayard or Du Guesclin, or the man of science upon Bacon or Galileo, so let the mystic of to-day—a fighter from necessity—look back upon Cornelius Agrippa, who spared not the enemies of the truth, either those who were openly hostile, or those who defiled the temple by the blasphemies of the false mystic.

ALCHEMISTIC APPARATUS:
An Athanor.

EFFIGIES PARASELCI MEDICI CELEBERRIMI

PORTRAIT OF PARACELSUS

THEOPHRASTUS PARACELSUS

MEDIÆVAL ALCHEMIST

CHAPTER I

EARLY LIFE AND TRAVELS

One of the greatest and best known of the mediæval occultists was Theophrastus Bombast von Hohenheim or, as he is generally called, Paracelsus. He belongs to that type of Mysticism which may be termed scientific rather than religious. He was not so much a mystic as an occultist, being a magician rather than a saint.

He was born at Einsiedeln, in the canton of Schwitz, in Switzerland, on November 10th, 1493, and christened Theophrastus, after a Greek disciple of Aristotle. His father, Wilhelm Bombast von Hohenheim, was a celebrated physician; his mother, whose maiden name was Ochsner, was matron of the pilgrims' hospital before her marriage. As a child Paracelsus

was delicate, being small and fragile, with a tendency to rickets. He consequently required constant care.

His mother died when he was young, and he was therefore left to the care of his father, who taught him the rudiments of alchemy, surgery, and medicine. Pharmacy did not hold a recognized position in Europe in those days as it had done in Egypt, Greece, and India prior to the Christian era, the first European pharmacopœia being established at Nuremberg in 1542, the year after Paracelsus died.

He attended school during his boyhood, and at the age of sixteen was sent to the university at Basle. In 1510 he adopted, as his cognomen, Paracelsus, in place of Hohenheim. It is believed by some that this name was conferred on him by his father, meaning that he was more learned than Celsus, the great physician who lived during the reign of the Roman Emperor Augustus, and he was henceforth known by this name.

Later he went to Würzburg, where he was instructed in magic by that master of the art Johannes Trithemius, abbot of Spanheim. The abbot was a devout student of the Bible, and insisted on his pupils studying it also. This naturally had a great effect on Paracelsus,

and largely influenced his thought. Throughout his writings he evinces a deep insight into the spiritual meaning of the Scriptures. Jesus Christ was to him the divine teacher and exemplar.

In 1513 we find Paracelsus working in the silver-mines and laboratories at Schwartz, devoting his spare time to alchemical experiments. It was about this time that he wrote his first work, *Archidoxa*.

Wearied with the scholasticism of those days, he went forth, at the age of twenty-three, to graduate in the university of nature, following what he felt was a divine impulse. He spent the next nine years of his life a pilgrim, seeking truth wherever it could be found. We can picture him, ragged and dusty, trudging along the roads under a broiling sun with his knapsack on his back. He writes: "A doctor must be a traveller because he must enquire of the world. Experiment is not sufficient. Experience must verify what can be accepted, or not accepted. Knowledge is experience." Elsewhere he says: "A doctor cannot become efficient at the universities; how is it possible in three or four years to understand nature, astronomy, alchemy or physic?"

He saw that but little good resulted from

the practice of the orthodox physicians, so he "determined to abandon such a miserable art and seek truth by some other way." Instead of learning through the medium of dusty book lore, he turned to the great open book of nature, written by the finger of God. "Writings," he remarks, "are understood by their letters, but nature through travel, and the different lands and provinces are the leaves of the code of nature. All created things are letters and books to describe the origin and descent of man."

Paracelsus first went to Vienna, thence to Cologne, and afterwards to Paris. From Paris he journeyed south to Montpellier, where he appears to have stayed some time. On leaving France he made his way to Italy, where he visited Bologna, Padua and Ferrara, cities upon which the Renaissance had left its mark.

Failing to find what he was seeking, he crossed the water to Spain. Passing through Granada he went to Lisbon, where he took ship to England, when news reached him that war had broken out in the Netherlands, whereupon he applied for the post of barber-surgeon to the Dutch army, in order that he might learn from the wounded. The sick, he maintained, should

be the doctor's books, and the war gave him the opportunity he sought.

Later he went to Denmark and Sweden, afterwards visiting Prussia, Bohemia, Poland, Transylvania, Wallachia and Croatia, healing those who were diseased, taking money from the wealthy to enable him to supply his needs, but giving his services freely to those who were unable to pay. This naturally aroused the hostility of the local practitioners, so that at times he was in grave danger.

He gathered his knowledge not only from physicians and alchemists, but from pedlars, gypsies, fortune-tellers, friars, travelling journeymen, and even beggars, sleeping at night where he could. He obtained information from every available source, even frequenting public inns for that purpose.

Leaving Croatia, he went, by way of Trieste, to Venice, and spent some time as army surgeon to the Venetians. Later he passed through the Balkans and the south of Russia to Moscow. While here he met a Tartar prince, with whom he journeyed to Constantinople, which he reached in 1521. He spent some months in that city, staying at the house of a famous occultist. While here he found what is called the Philosopher's Stone—that is, he attained by

practical experience to a knowledge of the principle upon which all truth rests. The Adept who initiated him was a fellow countryman, of whom it is asserted that he was seen, still alive, at the end of the seventeenth century.

CHAPTER II

WANDERINGS AND DEATH

PARACELSUS left Constantinople for Venice in the year 1522 to act as army surgeon in the war between Charles V, the Emperor of Germany, and Francis I the King of France. He was renowned as a healer wherever he went, and was often sent for by men of high rank whom he cured after they had been given up by the doctors. He next visited Bohemia, Poland, and Sclavonia, but his marvellous skill in curing those who were diseased provoked the open hostility of the ordinary practitioners, and they traduced him in every way. He says, "I pleased no one except the sick whom I healed."

Early in 1526 we find him settled at Wurtemburg practising as a physician and surgeon, having gathered round him a circle of student disciples. But his stay was brief, for there were too many doctors of the old school to tolerate his interference with their profession. Like

Demetrius, the silversmith of Ephesus, they found their livelihood threatened, and their occupation likely to be gone. But Paracelsus maintained that his " duty was to heal the sick, not enrich the apothecaries." The study of medicine was at a very low ebb in those days, and he naturally conceived a great contempt for the physicians of his time. He held fast to his knowledge and moved elsewhere, invariably winning a hearing from the younger generation. Again and again he had to fly, for his life was constantly threatened.

Towards the end of December, 1526, Paracelsus bought the citizenship of Strasburg, and prepared to settle down. It seemed as if at last he had found a haven of refuge, where he could rest. But trouble arose with the doctors over his curing Philip, the Margrave of Baden, who was suffering from dysentery and whose life was despaired of.

The next we hear of him is at Basle, where he was appointed professor of medicine. His lectures, however, so offended the orthodox physicians that he was in danger of imprisonment, whereupon he departed for Alsace, where he effected many cures, his patients being astonished at his skill. Later he went to Esslingen in Switzerland. The roof of the

house in which he lodged was found in 1882 to be covered with astrological signs and kabalistic characters, but too blackened to be accurately deciphered. He fitted up the cellar of his residence as a laboratory for alchemical and astrological experiments and studies. Poverty, however, eventually compelled him to give up the house, and he took to the road again.

He passed through Switzerland and made his way to Nuremberg, reaching that city on November 23rd, 1529. While here he obtained permission to publish his book *The French Malady*. This exasperated the medical faculty, who put pressure on the authorities, and an order was issued prohibiting the sale of his works.

Paracelsus now took up his abode for a time at Beratzhausen, a village near Ratisbon, on a small tributary of the Danube. While here he wrote part of the *Paramirum*. If men will not listen to me, he thought, in due time they will read and learn from my writings. He spent the summer and autumn of 1531 with the burgomaster at St. Gall in Switzerland, who had invited him to his house, being in bad health. While here he attended the poor of the town without fee or reward, working at his books during his spare time. It was while he

was at St. Gall that he wrote the greater part of the *Paramirum.*

Paracelsus left St. Gall about the end of 1531 and wandered for many years teaching and distributing the Bible. He spent some time in Switzerland, but had to flee in 1534, in poverty and rags, owing to the persecution of the priests. He made his way through the mountains to Innsbruck, where he applied to the burgomaster for permission to practise as a physician, but, being in rags, was refused on the ground that he could not be a doctor, or he would have been well dressed. He was always careless about his dress, but, after his wanderings, homelessness and semi-starvation, he could not help his poverty-stricken appearance.

Being "forced to clear out," he went to Stertzing, where the plague was raging, and offered his services to the burgomaster and magistrates; but they refused his assistance. He, however, practised privately, and earned sufficient to provide himself with the necessary clothing, food and lodging. After leaving Stertzing he continued his wanderings, working his way through the Tyrol to Ulm and then to Augsburg, where his work *The Greater Surgery* was published. He passed on, crossing the Danube, to Bohemia. He now had more leisure

and made use of it writing further books. He eventually departed, by way of Presburg, for Vienna, where he stayed some time. Towards the end of 1537 he journeyed to Villach in Carinthia, where he heard of his father's death. The property bequeathed to him was handed over, after the necessary business formalities had been complied with.

Paracelsus continued his wanderings for the next two years, finally reaching Salzburg, where he was welcomed by Duke Ernst of Bavaria, and his wanderings ended.

Various legends have been current as to the nature of his death, the one most generally accepted being that he was murdered by assassins hired by his enemies while staying at an inn. He had been suffering for some time from an insidious disease, and it seems more likely that he passed peacefully away, after giving instructions as to the disposal of his earthly chattels, on September 24th, 1541.

He left but few worldly goods, but his writings are invaluable. Like all who forsake the beaten track, he not only had his followers, but his enemies, who denounced and vilified him in every possible manner.

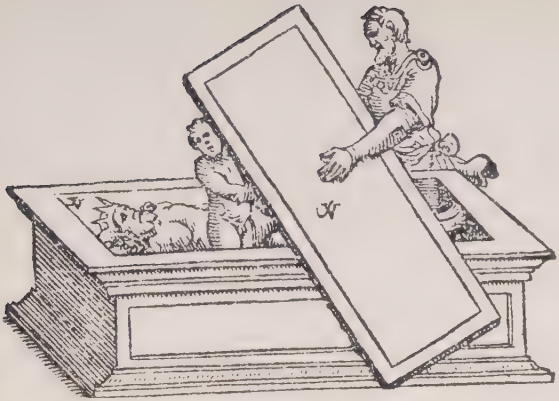
CHAPTER III

AS ABOVE, SO BELOW

THE key to Paracelsus's teaching is to be found in the ancient hermetic formula, "As it is below, so it is above"—in other words, whatever exists in the higher realms expresses itself, in some form or other, in the lower spheres, including our material world.

All things emanate from a Primal Essence. "Everything," says Paracelsus, "is One, and its origin can only be one Eternal Unity," hence there is a universal relationship. Everything is in mutual sympathy with everything else, and is more or less affected by it, just as the sun influences vegetation, the moon the tides, or the smoke from factories affects the surrounding atmosphere.

Life is both omnipresent and eternal. Everything that exists possesses soul, that being the element which connects all things. When creation took place the Primal Essence, as it were, divided, thus causing duality, or differen-



SYMBOLICAL ILLUSTRATION
Representing the
Coetion of Gold Amalgam in a Closed Vessel.

SYMBOLICAL ILLUSTRATION
Representing the
Transmutation of the Metals.

tiation, hence manifestation. All manifestation existed previously, but in a latent, or hidden condition.

Man is a microcosm of the macrocosm—that is, he is an epitome of the universe; in other words, he is a universe in miniature. Whatever exists in the universe exists also in him. He is thus influenced by his whole environment, just as, in turn, he influences it. Man is the culminating point of nature, and contains all the substances which exist in this world, or elsewhere; just as a slice contains the same ingredients as the whole of the plum pudding. "There is nothing," says Paracelsus, "in heaven or upon earth which does not exist in man." Man is thus, potentially, a god, and may develop to any extent. To know man is, therefore, to know nature.

The condition of nature being largely dependent on the state of mankind as a whole, explains our external environment. Men's evils find expression in the universe around, which is the outward and visible symbol of their inward and spiritual condition. By reunion with God man may re-establish the harmony that originally existed, and so bring the will of the Supreme to again perfectly express itself in nature.

Man, Paracelsus tells us, may either resemble

an animal, like his animal father, or, if he lets the Divine Spirit illuminate him, a god.

He also states that "without evil good could not be known or appreciated; but in the source of good (God) there can be no evil," thus repudiating the idea that both good and evil exist in God, the All-Good.

There are three fundamentals upon which, according to Paracelsus, all our knowledge must be based. First: Prayer, or aspiration after good, by means of which we reach God. Second: Faith, based upon knowledge, through which we attain to Christ. Third: Imagination, by means of which we become, as it were, immersed in our souls, so that our external senses become quiescent, and the superficial, or sense learning, gives place to the inner, or Divine Wisdom.

Paracelsus, like other occultists, teaches that man's constitution is sevenfold. He divides it as follows:—

1. The Elementary Body, or physical form.
2. The Archæus, or vital force.
3. The Sidereal Body, or astral form.
4. The Animal Soul, or seat of selfish desires.
5. The Rational Soul, or spiritual body.
6. The Spiritual Soul, or seat of the higher aspirations.

7. The Man of the New Olympus; the Psychic Germ, Atma, or Spirit; the inmost or Divine Essence.

The inner is the real man, and may learn all things by means of his relationship with everything. The external man is merely a kind of sheath. The invisible body is hidden within the visible body, and is of a similar shape, being a sort of counterpart of it. It is ethereal in its nature, and not only permeates the whole of the physical frame, but even extends beyond it.

CHAPTER IV

DOCTRINE OF SIGNATURES

THE doctrine of Signatures, although known to occultists from the earliest ages, is generally associated with the teaching of Paracelsus, for it runs like a thread through his writings. In brief, it means that the inner or invisible ever impresses its character, or stamps its signature, upon the outer or visible.

The word "signature" is derived from the Latin *signare*, which means to sign. The word "doctrine" is derived from the Latin *docere*, to teach. The doctrine of Signatures, therefore, refers to what is taught concerning the marks placed upon all creatures and things by stellar influences. The identity of all things may thus be recognized by the mark placed, or the signature impressed upon them by invisible influences, just as a phrenologist can diagnose a man's character from the shape of his head, or we know the engraving on a seal from the impression it leaves on wax.

When a man writes a letter he signs his name at the end in order that his identity may be known. So also, though this is by no means so evident to the average man, all external or visible things have impressed upon them the stamp of their origin in the invisible world. Their relationship with other forms of manifestation is thereby revealed. One may be ignorant of the signs by which the planets and stars mark their progeny, but those who are familiar with stellar influences will recognize them, and at once perceive the relationship existing between the various things marked, or sealed.

In like manner, a man who can neither read nor write may be unable to decipher the autograph attached to a letter, but his inability to recognize the signature does not affect the matter ; it simply reveals the ignorance of the man. So also inability to recognize the marks impressed on things by stellar influence does not affect the truth of the doctrine of Signatures ; it only shows a lack of knowledge on our part concerning them.

The stars and planets influence man by means of their common magnetism. They thus impress their character, or stamp their signature, upon all things and persons. Every being belongs to one or other of the seven

planetary families, either that of the Sun, the Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, or Saturn. The inner nature of every being corresponds, to a very large extent, to the attributes of that particular planet in whose spiritual vortex it was originally involved. For instance, a soul belonging to the Martian family will manifest an attitude of aggressive, impetuous leadership ; on the other hand, one belonging to the Saturnian family will be of a cold, calculating nature.

The doctrine of Signatures affects everything throughout nature, from the highest to the lowest. All things possess attractive and repulsive qualities. Every species, genus, race, family and kingdom has its group signature, just as a man has his individual signature.

The universe is composed of an infinite number of entities and groups of entities, all interacting and interdependent. Everything has an influence, either slight or great, upon every other thing. All things are constantly sending out vibrations which bring them in contact with the human organism, every human organism having a special complex vibration peculiar to itself, and determined by its individual signature.

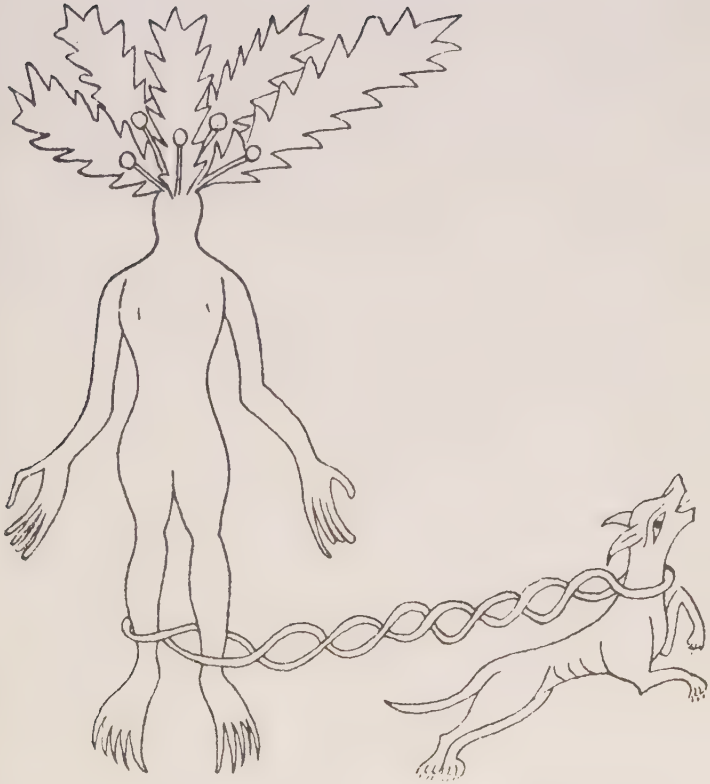
Not only is man influenced by the stars,

but everything by which he is surrounded is ceaselessly sending him vibrations, and so adding to his harmony or discord. They are thus ever leaving their impress, or stamping their signature upon him, by means of these vibrations.

CHAPTER V

NECROMANCY

PARACELSUS deals somewhat fully with what is called Necromancy. He tells us how, by means of what he terms the sidereal body, one may discover the secrets of the person to whom it belongs. Among the inhabitants of the invisible world are certain beings called elementals. Though not human spirits, they are sometimes mistaken for them. They are invisible to mortal sight, able to pass through matter, propagate offspring, are of many varieties, and belong to the different elements of earth, air, fire and water. They are called respectively gnomes, sylphs, salamanders and undines, and are more accessible to childlike and sincere men than to those who are egotistical and conceited. These elementals sometimes make use of the sidereal body in order to simulate its owner and play pranks with the lower class of mediums. Although they



DOG UPROOTING A MANDRAKE
From a manuscript of the fourteenth century in the British Museum.

often cause trouble through deception, they are not actuated by evil motives, but act as they do more from fun. It is by means of these denizens of the invisible world that a magician can sometimes discover the secrets of others.

Dreams, forebodings and prescience are from the sidereal body. When a man's physical body is quiet, as in sleep, his sidereal body is active. Hence we get dreams, such dreams corresponding with the aspects of the stars and planets at the time of dreaming. The presentiments of animals are due to a like cause, for they also possess a sidereal body.

Connected with the sidereal body is what Paracelsus calls the evestrum. By its aid the future may be known. It was by means of the world's evestrum that the sibyls and prophets of old read the future as in a mirror.

Paracelsus describes how, at death, the lower bodies disintegrate until the man eventually reaches what he calls the New Olympus. In the case of those who die prematurely by suicide the sidereal body remains in the earth sphere until the time when decease would have taken place in the ordinary course of nature. Retaining full possession of their earthly desires, they

continually haunt their earthly places of abode. Under certain conditions they become visible. They are liable to obsess the lower class of mediums, and in some instances, it is said, become vampires. But they possess no power over the pure-minded, similarity of thought or desire being necessary to form the connecting link. Male and female parasites are sometimes formed from the elements of this body by persons of a lewd imagination. They fasten on the opposite sex as ghostly lovers, and are called incubi and succubæ.

CHAPTER VI

ORIGIN OF DISEASES

According to Paracelsus all diseases, except those which arise from mechanical causes, have an invisible origin, and can be cured by knowledge derived from the Highest. Man may thus rule over all things.

The principle of life is a spiritual essence, and causes health or disease according to the conditions under which it operates. "There is only one universal principle of life, and by it all beings are sympathetically connected together," says Paracelsus.

It is because of the sympathetic relationship existing between man and the universe that some diseases are caused by astral influences. Thus, the life of a man is affected by the Sun, his blood by Mars, his affections by Venus, his intellect by Mercury, and so on. A physician ought therefore to understand, not only the constitution of man, but also that of the universe, and be acquainted with the corre-

spondence between them. The magnetism from the sun and stars, rightly used, draws the disease out of the sufferer. Under certain aspects the influence of the stars and planets is harmonious, or what is called good or beneficent; under other aspects it is inharmonious, or what is called bad or malefic. The stars are not really good and bad, but they draw out that which is within us, just as the warmth of the sun brings forth both the sweet scent of the rose and the stench of the dunghill.

Other diseases are caused through taking injurious elements into the system, or by overtaxing the physical organs. The various organs of man being related, not only to the different stars, but also to the various plants, certain herbs may be used to restore depleted vitality. To know what herbs are required it is necessary to understand the relationship or correspondence existing between the stars, plants and man.

Another class of diseases is due to the action of our evil passions, wrong thoughts, or a morbid imagination; thus, fear may cause diarrhœa, envy give rise to jaundice, anger produce fever, etc. Other diseases, again, arise from some pre-existent cause.

CHAPTER VII

MAGIC

PARACELSUS is generally associated with what is called Magic, being looked upon by many as a magician pure and simple. Magic is generally thought to be a species of conjuring. It is nothing of the sort, being in reality not only the greatest of all the sciences, but also an art. It cannot be learned from books, but has to be acquired by practical experience. It is not simply a theoretical knowledge of the visible and invisible elements that compose man and the universe, but the art of being able to make use of the invisible powers of nature. It necessitates a practical acquaintance with spritual forces, and is a sort of divine wisdom. The magical powers possessed by Jesus, and, in a lesser degree, by the apostles, were due to their holiness rather than their learning.

The word "magic" is derived from the old Chaldeans, who used the word *imga*, afterwards

transformed into *mag*, meaning wise, holy and learned, to designate their wisest sages, priests, and philosophers. The word "imagination" is derived from the same root. These old magi, or magicians, seeing the relationship existing between the inner and the outer, formulated their science in accordance with this relationship, and developed the art of magic.

The first requisite for the study of magic is a knowledge of natural science in its highest sense, not simply an acquaintance with the external facts, which the intellect may grasp, but the inner wisdom that the merely intellectual man is unable to reach.

Magic teaches the nature of the inner and the outer, and the manner in which the one acts upon the other. The inner man has faculties, either latent or active, far transcending those of the bodily senses. For instance, man possesses the power to see distant friends, future events, and such-like. It is because the spirit and the external appearances of nature are essentially one that knowledge of the inner gives power over the outer. By understanding the essence of things, man becomes a master of nature.

Paracelsus writes: "If we rightly understood the mind of man nothing would be impossible

to us on earth. . . . Every doubt breaks the operation (of magic). Faith must confirm the imagination, for faith establishes the will. Because men do not perfectly imagine and believe, the result is that the arts are uncertain, while they might be perfectly certain." It is even recorded of Jesus that He was unable to do many works because of the unbelief of the people.

The inner body is more active when the external body is passive, as, for instance, in sleep. The imagination is then more free to act. A strong faith and a vivid imagination are the two great requisites. Imagination is not simply fancy, nor faith merely belief. Imagination is the image-making faculty. Concentrated imagination is a real thing, and is a power closely allied to desire, while fancy is illusive and disintegrating. It flies apart, and is not lasting. Faith is more than belief, being based upon knowledge.

Imagination is the instrument by which the spirit operates on the visible or external. "All the wonders of magic are performed by will, imagination and faith." Formulæ, ceremonies, images, talismans, etc., are sometimes used, but they are valueless apart from the operation of the spirit, just as a sword is

useless without the arm that wields it. They are simply aids, like ritual in worship, nothing more.

It was by means of faith, based upon knowledge, that the apostles and patriarchs performed feats above the ordinary course of nature, and the saints their miracles. "The power," writes Paracelsus, "which enabled the saints to work their miracles is still alive and accessible to all. It is the power of the Holy Ghost."

Just as a wood-carver carves out of a piece of wood, or the pregnant woman impresses on her child, that which is in his or her mind, so does the magician, by means of his imagination, create out of the plastic essence of life.

Under certain conditions, and within certain limits, this power may be used for evil as well as for good purposes, like any other kind of knowledge. This is what is called black magic, and, sooner or later, recoils disastrously upon those who practise it.

As examples of the black art Paracelsus shows how, by secret methods, persons sometimes cause those of the opposite sex to become passionately enamoured of them, how others again are made blind, or sick, and sometimes

to die by wasting away; also how cows are bewitched and their milk poisoned. But a pure heart and a strong will are proof against any evil occult force, especially if they co-exist with a strong faith in God.

CHAPTER VIII

ALCHEMY

We will now deal with what is called Alchemy, for Paracelsus was a great alchemist. Alchemy is not, as many suppose, the artificial manufacture of gold out of the baser metals, but the higher or vital chemistry by which substances are not only changed, but transmuted. In the same way that the spirit induces changes in the soul and body by impressing its nature upon them, or, as Paracelsus would say, stamping its signature thereon, the spiritual gold effects changes, not only in the fluid, or astral gold, but even, under certain conditions, in its earthly counterpart. Vegetable and animal life is amenable to the same process of transmutation.

On the principle of the unitary basis of production the metamorphosis of species is not so entirely impossible as at first sight might appear. We have examples of it in the process of fermentation, by which the mild

juice of grapes is converted into wine, or milk into butter and cheese; in both cases proceeding out of one thing without requiring the addition of any extraneous substance; they are changed into different specific natures solely by the operation of their own fermentation.

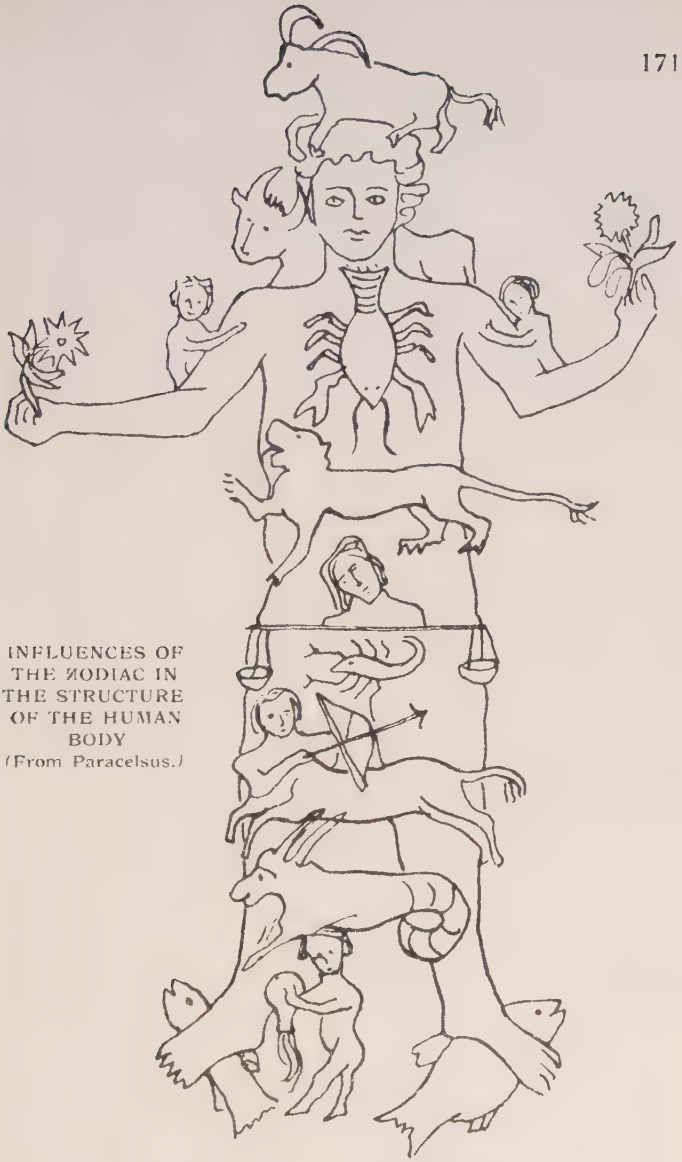
As illustrating the alchemical method of transmutation Paracelsus writes: "The alchemist uses the good qualities of our food for our nourishment, and expels those things that would harm us. The ox eats grass, man eats the ox. Every creature has its own food. The peacock eats snakes and lizards, animals complete in themselves, but not good for food, except to the peacock. So each man needs his own food and his alchemist to separate the evil from the good. A pig will eat what men throw away, and that proves that the alchemist in the pig needs to be far more careful than he needs to be in man. The alchemist takes the good and changes it into a tincture which he sends through the body to nourish the flesh and all that is in the body. This alchemist dwells in the stomach, where he works and cooks. The man eats a piece of flesh in which is both bad and good. When the flesh reaches the stomach there is the alchemist who divides it. What does not belong to

health he casts away to its own place, but sends the good wherever it is needed."

While chemistry deals with physical matter, alchemy treats of the astral principle lying behind and affecting that matter; just as astronomy treats of the material side, or bodies of the stars and planets, while astrology deals with their psychic influence or souls.

Chemistry and astronomy may be learnt by any one who possesses sufficient intellect. Alchemy and astrology, on the other hand, require, to some extent at least, spiritual perception. To be an alchemist one must possess the ability to perceive the essence of things, and, by the power of the soul, produce material substances from this essence. Thus, by changing the higher or ethereal essence of gold the earthly gold becomes changed; in much the some way that the shape of a man's head is affected by his mental capacity, as phrenology teaches. Nature is the great alchemist, and is continually transforming all things.

The basis of alchemy has been concisely defined in the following statement: "There abides in nature a certain pure matter, which, being discovered and brought by art to perfection, converts to itself proportionally all imperfect bodies that it touches." The true



INFLUENCES OF THE ZODIAC IN THE STRUCTURE OF THE HUMAN BODY
(From Paracelsus.)

ground of the transmutation of metals, or any other transmutation, lies in the homogeneity, or oneness, of the root substance of all things. Metals, minerals, and all diversified natures, being of the same created first principles, may be reduced into their common basis.

The outward manifestation or visible form of things is open to investigation by all, but the source is everywhere hidden, or occult. Ordinary analysis is unable to discover this underlying Universal Substance or Matter of the alchemists. The alchemists never taught that lead as lead, or mercury as mercury, could be specifically changed into gold, any more than a tulip could be turned into a daisy, or a dog into a horse, or *vice versa* ; what they did assert was that the subject matter of which these metals were composed might be withdrawn by art and transported from inferior forms, being set free by the force of a superior attraction, thus, in a sense, hastening their evolution.

All matter, says Paracelsus, is composed, in varying proportions, of the three substances, "sulphur, mercury and salt, and these are acted on by a fourth principle, which is life." We are not to understand by these terms the ordinary substances, but as symbolically representing the fiery and generative energy,

or active principle ; the universal vibratory, or passive principle ; and their equilibrium, or the fixed and stable aspect of things. He employs alchemical terms to denote spiritual essences, spiritual truths being veiled under chemical allegories. Alchemy is threefold in its nature. First : the transformation of evil and vice into good and virtue. Second : knowledge of the nature of the invisible elements. Third : the transmutation of metals —that is, raising them to higher levels.

Paracelsus describes how the various pure metals—not the ordinary ones, but their purified and etherealized counterparts—are to be mixed, and the position the planets should occupy at the time, to produce a compound he calls electrum, which possesses not only the physical, but also the astral virtues of the metals composing it. " Many wonderful things," he says," may be made of this electrum. . . . possessing great magic powers." Articles may be made from it which, if worn, cure paralysis, epilepsy, apoplexy, etc., electrum being antipathetic to all evil influences. The operator must, however, possess the requisite magical or magnetic power in himself, otherwise he will fail to obtain any results. He relates the case of a man " who possessed a bell made out

of electrum," by means of which he caused apparitions to appear.

By the aid of electrum magicum it is possible to get in touch with what is called the astral light, or the Akashic records, upon which events are recorded, and seen by those whose clairvoyant vision is sufficiently developed, somewhat as we see things reproduced on a cinematograph. We may thus see things past and present.

Although Paracelsus asserts that material gold and silver may be, and have been, produced by alchemical means, still he condemns the practice as useless, which it certainly is. The deeper knowledge of things is not to be acquired merely to produce the grosser metal, but to purify the gold of our nature.

The old alchemists were able to bring plants, and even animals, to life again, and also, under certain conditions, to prolong physical life for a very considerable time by means of what is termed the *elixir vitæ*.

CHAPTER IX

ASTROLOGY

With regard to Astrology, Paracelsus did not simply calculate nativities or draw horoscopes in order to foretell the future, but taught it in its higher or spiritual aspects, as it influenced the soul's development. Astrology is an exact science like astronomy. The facts are written in the starry heavens. The failures we so often meet with in the case of astrological predictions are due, not to astrology, but to the astrologer's inability to rightly interpret it; just as the mistake made in judging a man's character from the shape of his head is the fault, not of phrenology, but of the incompetent phrenologist. The firmament, or stellar universe, is an open book of God to all who can read it, just as a man who understands Greek, Arabic, or Hebrew can read a book written in any one of those languages. The spiritually developed seer requires neither books nor tables to understand the relationship existing

between himself and the universe, which influences attract and which repel, but will know by the changes in his own soul.

Whatever a man has in his constitution, as indicated in his horoscope or birth-chart, can be attracted by him from the sky, or even the earth, or the people of his environment. "If I have manna in my constitution," writes Paracelsus, "I can attract manna from heaven. Melissa is not only in the garden, but also in the air and in heaven. Saturn is not only in the sky, but also deep in the ocean and earth. What is Venus but the artemisis that grows in the garden? and what is iron but the planet Mars? That is to say, Venus and Artemisia are both products of the same essence, while Mars and iron are manifestations of the same cause."

The magnetism of the stars affects us through the corresponding magnetism in ourselves. Thus, the Sun affects our health for good or ill, according to whether the aspects are favourable or otherwise. Mars, again, gives us force, vigour, and energy, which may be used either for constructive or destructive purposes; likewise Venus develops our artistic faculties if the vibrations are harmonious, but produces a tendency for low pleasures if they are dis-

cordant. The other planets affect us in like manner.

Although man may be influenced by the heavenly bodies, still he should govern, not be governed by them. The stellar forces may incline, predispose and urge, but they are powerless to compel us against our will. Paracelsus writes: "It is an old saying that a wise man may rule the stars; and I believe it . . . in my own sense. The stars force nothing into us that we are not willing to take; they incline us to nothing we do not desire. They are free for themselves, and we are for ourselves. . . . It is absurd to believe that the stars can make a man. Whatever the stars can do, we can do ourselves, because the wisdom which we obtain from God overpowers the heaven and rules the stars." Although the sidereal essences in man and the stars attract one another by means of their common magnetism, still "man is the master of his own soul and . . . he may control his passions and repulse influences which he does not desire."

Where man wills, the gods themselves are powerless; but it must be the universal will, not that of a few isolated individuals. Even the inharmonious angles formed by the planets.

THE ZODIAC

the squares, and the oppositions can be transmuted and brought to manifest on a higher plane, and help the soul's development. Sanitation and hygiene, for instance, applied generally, will get rid of many of the diseases from which we suffer, in spite of anything the planets can do to reproduce them.

"Three spirits," says Paracelsus, "united in one, live and act in man; . . . but all three are only the reflection, image, or echo of one primordial creation. The first is the essence of the elements; the second the soul of the stars, the third the spirit—the *life*. . . . The body comes from the elements, the soul from the stars, and the spirit from God." He adds: "The individual terrestrial life should correspond with the laws governing the universe; man's spiritual aspirations should be directed to harmonize with the wisdom of God."

CHAPTER X

COMPARISON WITH OTHER MYSTICS

THERE is much in the teaching of Paracelsus, though perhaps not so evident on the surface, that not only corresponds with what other mystics and occultists have taught, though somewhat differently expressed, but it is also in agreement with the ancient hermetic wisdom which has survived, veiled under allegory, throughout the ages. Truth is always fundamentally the same.

The doctrine of Signatures, taught by Paracelsus, has been known to occult science from time immemorial, and is identical in essence with Swedenborg's doctrine of Correspondences.

The Primal Essence of Paracelsus, which, by dividing, causes duality, or differentiation, hence manifestation, is similar to the Unfathomable Will of Jacob Boehme, which, by creating a mirror, is able to behold Itself. It is also in

keeping with the teaching of all the great hermetic schools of antiquity which state that the Primal Unity manifests through duality.

Paracelsus asserts that, prior to manifestation, everything existed in a latent, or hidden condition. In this he not only coincides with Boehme, but is also in harmony with the teaching of the Kabalah, which states that all manifestation emanates from Ain Soph, the Unmanifest.

In accord with Swedenborg and Boehme, Paracelsus maintains that the animal creation is the outward and visible representation of man's inward condition. "Animals," says Paracelsus, "are the mirror of man. Whatever animal elements exist in the world, exist in the soul of man."

Swedenborg held that man was nothing of himself, but derived all from God. Paracelsus writes: "God is the Father of Wisdom, and all wisdom is derived from Him. We may grow into knowledge, but we cannot grow knowledge ourselves, because in ourselves is nothing but what has been deposited there by God."

The three spirits which, according to Paracelsus, live and act in man are, broadly

speaking, equivalent to Boehme's three principles.

Writing of Paracelsus, Professor Strunz says he " had just that piety which to-day we admire in the classic mystics. He stood against rationalism, and all the fanciful religiosities. He saw God in nature, just as he saw Him in the microcosm, and was amazed at the reflection of the divine light."

Although he lived in an age when one had almost to choose between being a Catholic or a Protestant, he was inwardly neither, looking to Christ Jesus alone for guidance ; still, he never formally left the Catholic Church, and was buried as a member of it. He says : " God requires from us our own heart, and not ceremonials, for with these faith in Him perishes." Elsewhere he writes : " Love and faith are one, for love comes through faith."

Paracelsus realized that a theological training did not impart to any man divine wisdom. In *De Fundamento Sapientiæ*, he writes : " The knowledge which our clergymen possess is not obtained by them from the Father, but they learn it from each other. They are not certain of the truth of what they teach . . . they fall into error and vanity, and mistake their own opinions for the wisdom of God. Hypocrisy

is not holiness, conceit is not power, slyness is not wisdom. . . . The power to recognize and follow the truth cannot be conferred by academical degrees; it comes only from God. . . . The highest power of the intellect, if it is not illuminated by love, is only a high grade of animal intellect."

AN ASTROLOGER AT THE BIRTH OF A CHILD

From a woodcut. 1618.

CHAPTER XI

A CHRISTIAN OCCULTIST

PARACELSUS has been accused of boastfulness, but this idea arises from misconception. Personally he seems to have been very modest and self-sacrificing, being fully alive to the truth that, unless one is taught and guided by the Holy Ghost, he is nothing. At the same time he was fully conscious of the greatness of the truths he enunciated.

Although a mystic, holding that union of the spirit with God was the source of all man's power, by which man was able to overcome evil spirits, understand the mysteries and discover the hidden arcana of nature, he was more essentially an occultist. He differs from such as Tauler, Madame Guyon, or Francis of Assisi, who were mystics pure and simple, caring less for knowledge than the realization of the Divine. Paracelsus was ever active in his search after the hidden or secret knowledge,

till he attained the higher wisdom. He took perhaps a more circuitous route to reach the same end, ever gathering knowledge as he went along. Though a deep student, he was by no means an ascetic.

It has been said of him that "in universal philosophy, so arduous, so arcane, and so hidden, no one was his equal." He towered above his contemporaries, declining to be blinded by the dust of ages. He looked to God's creation, refusing to bow the knee to Baal. The usual fate of pioneers was his lot, for he suffered persecution throughout his life.

Although Paracelsus saw that in God, the source of all good, there could be no such thing as evil, he yet maintained that good could not exist without evil. He asserts that "without evil good could not be known or appreciated."

He was both a Theist and a Pantheist, realizing that the Supreme was transcendent and immanent. While he held that God was in all things, he also taught that all things proceeded from God, "the Supreme Cause and Essence of all things," the Father of all His creatures; that everything that happens takes place through the Will of the Supreme.

Great as was the knowledge attained by Paracelsus, although not to be compared

with that of our remote and more spiritual forefathers of the old Golden Age, he realized that magical powers of themselves bring responsibility, not happiness. Occult knowledge is for soul development only, to be used by the unselfish and pure in heart in the service of humanity. It has been well and truly said that an undevout occultist is mad.

He was learned in all the wisdom of Chaldea, Egypt and India, yet he belonged to the Christian faith, holding that faith should rest on the teachings of Christ. He says " by the heart we come to God, by faith to Christ, and by imagination we receive the Holy Ghost."

The whole of his philosophy was based on the Bible, which he knew almost by rote. He tells us, if we would know what magic is, to seek it in Revelation. The Bible, he says, is the true key and interpreter. John was as much a magician as Moses, Elijah, Solomon, or Daniel. Man, he maintains, is nothing of himself, but derives all from God.

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